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"Bess" from
Grandma





GUTHRED AND EADRED. PAGE 23.

HISTORICAL TALES

OF

ILLUSTRIOUS CHILDREN.

BY

AGNES STRICKLAND,

AUTHORESS OF "THE RIVAL CRUSOES," ETC. ETC

WITH ENGRAVINGS.

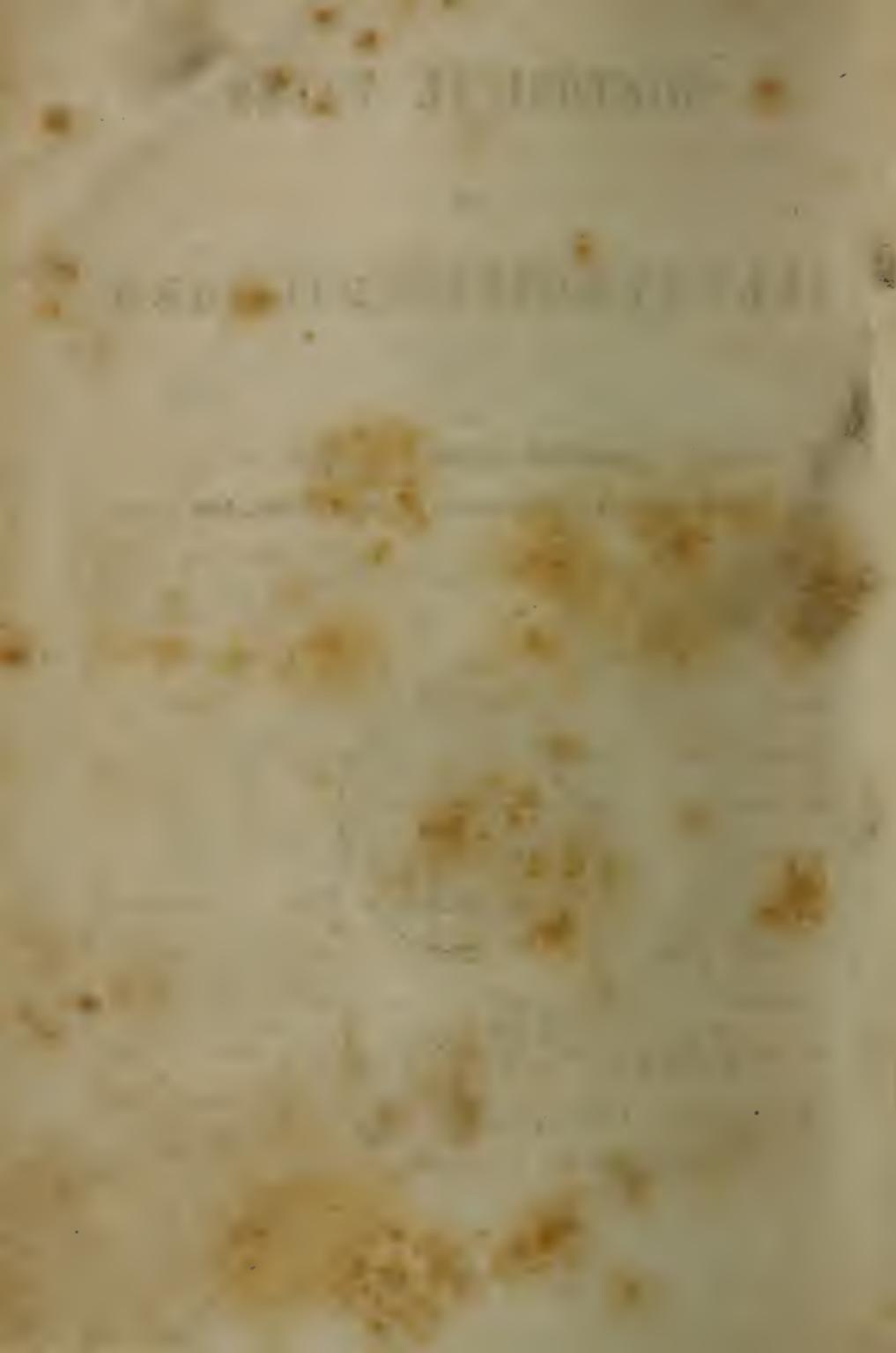


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P R E F A C E.

HISTORY, which may be regarded as an inexhaustible treasury of entertainment and information, containing as it does the records of past ages, and of every important event connected with the rise and fall of nations, and abounding with incidents of such extraordinary interest, that the pages of few works of fiction can offer any thing so attractive, is seldom presented to the youthful reader in an agreeable form.

A barren chronology of monarchical successions, bloody wars, and dry political intrigues, comprise, generally speaking, the contents of the historical works prepared for the use of schools, from which the reluctant student turns with weariness and distaste.

Such volumes resemble the charts in which navigators delineate the barren ranges of hills that form the leading features of a country, while the soft undulations of the fertile valleys, the verdant groves, flowery plains, and pleasant streams, are absent from the picture.

It is the object of the present work to offer to the Young a series of moral and instructive tales, each founded on some striking authentic fact in the annals of English History, in which royal or distinguished children were engaged ; and in which it is the Author's wish to convey, in a pleasing form, useful and entertaining information illustrative of the manners, customs, and costume of the era connected with the events of every story ; to which is also added, an Historical Summary, which the Author recommends to the attention of the juvenile reader, as containing many interesting particulars not generally to be met with in abridged histories.

HISTORICAL TALES.

GUTHRED,

THE WIDOW'S SLAVE.

WILL it be credited by the youthful reader, that in this now free and happy land, slaves were once bought and sold with as little remorse as cattle are in the present day transferred from one master to another? Strange and revolting as it must appear to every lover of his country, such was once the existing practice, not only in the remote ages when the darkness of heathen barbarism overshadowed the British islands, but even in the reign of the benevolent and enlightened Alfred, under whose auspices law and justice were established in forms so pure and equitable, that many of his institutions have been handed down to us from our ancestors as the noblest legacy in their power to bestow.

Civilization, it is true, made a great progress during the era of this accomplished monarch, but he had so many difficulties to contend with, and so many preju-

dices to overcome, that it is not to be wondered if some abuses remained unreformed, and, among others, this inhuman traffic.

There were few occupiers of land in those days who were not possessed of thralls, or domestic slaves, who were distinguished from the hired servants by the degrading badge of an iron collar, on which was inscribed the name of the hapless bondman, with the notification that he was the purchased or the born thrall, whichever it might happen to be, of such a person, of such a place.

The tale I am about to relate, which is founded on an authentic historical fact of this nature, is an illustrative sketch of the manners and customs of the Anglo Saxons and Danes, during that glorious period of our annals, the age of Alfred the Great, in whose reign its events took place.

One bright autumnal morning about eleven o'clock, the hour at which our Saxon ancestors usually took their principal meal, just as the family and serving-folk of the Saxon franklin,* Selwood, were seating themselves at the well covered board, a loud barking from the watch dogs that guarded the homestead, answered by the low, but more angry growling of the

* A Saxon freeholder, or gentleman, who was possessed of one or more hydes of land. A hyde contains 100 acres.

household curs under the table, announced the approach of strangers.

Selwood, who was beginning to carve for his household, paused to listen, and grasped his huge knife with a firmer hold, as though he meditated using it as a weapon of defence in case of approaching danger. His serving-folk, who, according to the custom of those days, sat at the same table with their master, but below the salt, started from their seats on the rough oaken benches that surrounded the lower end of the board, laid hands on scythes, flails, or reaping hooks, and exclaimed in alarm, ‘The Danes be upon us !’

So contiguous indeed was the town of Whittingham, near which the farm and homestead of Selwood were situated, to the Danelagh, or Danish colony, that had established itself in great power in Northumberland, that perpetual fear existed in the minds of the franklin and his household, lest their dangerous neighbours should at any time think proper to break the hollow truce then subsisting between the Saxons and Danes, and pay him one of their predatory visits.

The Danish settlements were, in fact, neither more nor less than so many formidable hordes of rapacious banditti, always ready to give and take offence, and on the look-out for plunder. They were a cruel,

faithless race, in whose promises no reliance could be placed, and whose only occupation consisted in rapine and deeds of blood.

The industrious habits and peaceful employments of the Saxons, who, having become naturalized to the soil, had abandoned the warlike manners of their fierce ancestors for the useful pursuits of the shepherd and the husbandman, were sorely interrupted by the incursions and ravages of the 'black strangers,' as the invading Danes were emphatically styled, from the sable hue of the vessels which brought this unwelcome swarm of northern robbers to the shores of England, where they first arrived in the reign of Egbert, and from that time contrived to obtain a footing in the country, and, being yearly reinforced with fresh bands of adventurers from the coasts of Denmark and Norway, they continued to gain strength, and at length establishing themselves, side by side as it were, of the Saxons, rendered themselves the terror of the peacefully disposed, and the scourge of the whole country. 'They are always before us,' says the Saxon chronicler; 'we always see the horizon reddened with flame, we always hear the tramp of war.'

At the period of Alfred's accession to the throne, nine pitched battles were fought in one year, between the English and the Danes, besides skirmishes and

private conflicts innumerable. Sometimes the Danes were defeated, but after each reverse they appeared to redouble their activity, and actually increased in power. ‘If thirty thousand are slain in one day,’ said the despairing Saxons, ‘there will be double that number in the field to-morrow.’ Sometimes, when the Saxons found themselves unable to cope with their formidable opponents, they were unwise enough to endeavour to purchase a shameful peace with gold; but the bribe was no sooner in the possession of the greedy barbarians, than they violated the dear-bought treaty, and committed all sorts of violence, for the sake of extorting fresh sums of money.

The appearance of a Danish holda, or chief, approaching the homestead of Selwood, though only attended by a boy of tender years, who was leading a brace of wolf-hounds in a leash, was sufficient to spread dismay through the dwelling.

There was an immediate consultation between Selwood and his wife, Winifred, as to whether they should treat the unwelcome visitor as an enemy, by refusing him admittance into the homestead, which doubtless he approached in the quality of a spy, or, as he came in a peaceful guise, choose the alternative of conciliating his friendship, by receiving him as a guest. ‘He is a stranger, and as it is meal time it

would be churlish to deny him entrance,' said Selwood, 'albeit, I would with greater pleasure invite a wolf to be my dinner guest.'

' The wolf would be the less dangerous visitor of the two, I trow,' said the careful Winifred, pocketing, as she spoke, the silver ladle, with which she was preparing to help herself from the bowl of plum porridge which stood before her.

Swindreda, her niece, was in the very act of whisking away the porridge also, muttering as she did so, ' that she had never taken the trouble of compounding such a dainty dish to tickle the palate of a Danish raven, for whom swine's flesh and barley broth were more than good enough,' when the holda, whose quick eye had caught the manœuvre as he entered, called out, ' Holla there, maiden ! is it your Saxon fashion to remove the best part of the cheer when a stranger surprises you at your meals ? Now, that is the very dish whereof I mean to eat. So saying, he snatched it from her hand, and, placing himself at the seat of honour at the table, he took a horn spoon from one of the serving men, and devoured the contents of the bowl in a trice, with the exception of a small portion, which he left at the bottom of the vessel, and handed over his shoulder with a patronizing air to his youthful attendant, who stood behind his stool, still holding the hounds in leash.

Guthred, for so the Danish chief called the boy, received this mark of favour with a sullen and reluctant air, and maintained a proud, cold demeanour, to the astonishment of the Saxon servants, who knew, from the iron collar, and other unequivocal badges of slavery about his person, that the boy was in a more degraded condition than themselves, being the purchased thrall or slave of Ricsig the Dane.

Ricsig appeared by no means an unkind master, for he took some pains to supply both the cravings of his hounds, and the probable wants of his young slave, with the choicest provisions on the franklin's table, without paying the slightest attention to the feelings of the indignant host and mortified household ; but it was thus that the insolent northmen conducted themselves when they entered the dwellings of the peaceful Saxons, who very seldom ventured to remonstrate with their unwelcome guests, lest they should draw upon themselves a still more formidable visitation in the shape of fire and sword, taking it for granted, that where one Dane made himself visible, ten more at least were lurking within call, in readiness to espouse any quarrel in which he might involve himself. It was this apprehension that withheld Selwood and his men from expelling the insolent intruder, who, after astonishing all parties with his voracity, laid hands on a curiously carved drinking

horn, which Swindreda, in her anxiety to secure the plum porridge, had forgotten to remove, and calling for metheglin, emptied and replenished it so often with this heavy beverage, that he soon got into high good humour, and after bestowing great commendations on the beauty of the horn, he, instead of taking possession of it by sticking it into his girdle, beside his battle axe, as too many of his countrymen in such case would have done, actually offered to purchase it of Selwood.

‘ It is the horn of my fathers,’ said the Saxon, ‘ and if I sell it to thee, it shall be for nought less than gold.’

‘ Gold,’ echoed the Dane scornfully, ‘ dost think I I am a Saxon monk, to carry coined pieces in my girdle ? My wealth,’ added he, significantly grasping the handle of his battle axe, ‘ is in the purses of my enemies.’

‘ That is to say,’ rejoined Selwood, ‘ that you mean to carry off my cunningly-wrought drinking horn, as a reward for my hospitality to thee and thy thrall.’

‘ Said I not that I would purchase it of thee ?’ demanded Ricsig.

‘ Ay, but what art thou willing to give me in exchange ?’ said the franklin.

‘ Thou shalt choose whether thou wilt have my

hound, Snath ; his fleet-footed companion, Wildbrach ; or my thrall, Guthred,' replied the holda ; ' all three have displeased me this morning : the two first led me hither on a false track of deer, and the latter hath perversely refused to eat of the food which I flung him even now from my own trencher ; so choose between them, for the horn is now more precious in my sight than either.'

Selwood's judgment was assisted in making his election by a hint from the most prudent of housewives, the thrifty Winifred, who whispered in his ear, ' Curs have we more than plenty, master mine, for they only encourage the serving folk in idle pastimes, and serve as a cloak to conceal their wastery when the oaten cakes wax mouldy or the meat is too fat for their liking ; but we are in need of a boy to tend the swine and sheep, and to do many other things, so choose the young thrall, who is a stout healthy lad, and, if discreetly trained, will do us worthy service both in and out of doors.'

No sooner had Selwood signified his choice to Ricsig, than the barter was completed by the Dane taking the boy by the collar, and transferring him to his new master in these words :

' I, Ricsig, give to thee, Selwood, Guthred my slave, to be thy thrall for ever.' Then tucking the

drinking horn into his belt, he strode out of the Saxon homestead, whistling to his dogs to follow.

Guthred flung himself on the ground and wept.

‘ Nay, cheer up, my dainty bird,’ said Winifred compassionately, ‘ thou wilt have no cause to lament thy change of masters, I promise, if thou wilt be a dutiful and pains-taking slave.’

Guthred redoubled his tears, and at length sobbed audibly.

‘ Thou didst not seem so loving to thy Danish master that thou shouldst bewail a separation from him thus passionately,’ observed Swindreda.

‘ Loving to him !’ echoed the boy indignantly, his large dark eyes flashing through his streaming tears as he spoke, ‘ loving unto a Dane,—to my born foe ?’

‘ Why then, thou shouldst rejoice in thy change of thraldom,’ said Winifred.

‘ It is for my thraldom that I weep,’ replied Guthred, ‘ for I was free born, and am no more disposed to serve a Saxon churl than to be the slave of a Danish robber.’

‘ High words do oft proceed from an empty stomach,’ observed his new master, sternly ; ‘ but I counsel thee, boy, to stint thy perverse prating, which can answer no other purpose than to bring the thong across thy shoulders.’

‘ Thy women folk pestered me with questions, or I

had only wept in silence,' replied Guthred scornfully.

'Women folk, indeed!' cried Swindreda, giving him a smart box on the ears. 'I'll teach thee to use more respectful language of thy betters, and let thee know, withal, that it is not the business of a thrall to weep, but to work.'

'It is well for thee that thou art a woman, though an ill-favoured one, or I had returned thy hard blow with usury,' retorted Guthred, clenching his hand.

Swindreda was preparing to inflict summary vengeance on the imprudent railer, but Winifred humanely interposed to prevent the visitation of her wrathful displeasure, by sending her to feed the poultry, while she herself proceeded to instruct the newly-purchased slave in some of the household duties which he would be required to perform.

On the following day, Selwood ordered his shepherd, his neatherd, swineherd, and woodcutter, to put him in the way of becoming a useful assistant in their several vocatoins, but Guthred was sullen and refractory with the men, and rebellious to the women; the authority of both was, of course, enforced by harsh measures, and the young thrall was compelled to yield reluctant obedience after repeated chastisements; thus entailing upon himself severe personal sufferings in addition to the hardships of servitude.

His foreign accent and complexion, so different from that of his Saxon masters, had obtained for Guthred the name of the Son of the Stranger, a designation by no means likely to improve his condition among the Saxon serfs and ceorls, who had suffered too deeply from the aggressions of the Danes to be disposed to regard any foreigner with favourable eyes. Guthred was exposed to many taunts from the serving folk, on account of his persisting in wearing his dark hair, flowing on his shoulders, in its natural length, and rich luxuriance of spiral ringlets. Long hair was only worn by persons of noble or royal birth; and though Guthred had refused to declare his birth and lineage, he assumed this envied distinction, to the infinite displeasure of his associates in labour, who had more than once seized upon him, and forcibly shorn these aristocratical honours from the proud head of the youthful slave; and when their mistress interposed her authority to prevent a repetition of the outrage, they vented their spleen in addressing him by the title of 'high and mighty thane,' whenever they required him to perform the most servile offices.

Guthred once smiled in scorn at the insult, and told his tormentors, 'that, like ignorant churls as they were, they addressed him by a title far below that which was his due.'

But this intimation drew upon him a torrent of such bitter mockery, that from that time forward he preserved a contemptuous silence when assailed by the taunts of the serfs.

The long weary winter, the hardest time of bondage that Guthred had yet sustained, passed away, and the sweet season of spring once more clothed the Northumbrian fields with verdure, and enamelled the pastures with flowers. It was some relief to the persecuted thrall of Selwood, when he was separated from the rude churls, and employed in the solitary office of keeping the sheep on the extensive downs, heath-clad hills, or pleasant meads; but, lovely as these scenes were, the sick heart of the young exile fondly yearned after the wild and rugged scenery of the far distant land of his fathers, whose eternal forests of sombre pines and chains of barren mountains, he preferred to the oaken glades, and the verdant hills and dales of the fertile island of the west, of which he had become an unwilling denizen. The land was indeed fair; but to him who has neither sympathies nor companionship, the most smiling landscape becomes a dreary desert.

Had Guthred ever felt the divine influence of religion, he might have supported his early sorrows with resignation; for, though companionless, he would have known that he was not alone, that he was up-

held by the everlasting arm of his Father and his God, and would have learned in every dispensation, however afflicting, to recognise his hand ; but he had been born in a heathen land, and the light of Christianity had never dawned on his benighted mind. Selwood and his household, indeed, were, nominally speaking, Christians ; but their creed and practice were so corrupted, and interwoven with pagan superstitions and idolatries, that they were scarcely in less darkness than the young heathen, whose aversion to their mode of worship excited their anger and contempt.

Guthred only disliked their mode of worship because it was theirs, for he had never deigned to examine into the nature of their belief ; from his own he drew no consolation ; it was made up of shadowy recollections of gigantic idols, before whose images he had been taught by his father to bow the knee in the depth of gloomy groves. His remembrance recalled their terrific forms, but of their attributes he retained no idea, though he was occasionally wont to invoke them as the avengers of his wrongs, when injured by his Danish or Saxon task-masters.

One day, when a war of words between him and Swindreda had ended in his stubborn refusal to draw water at her behest, and a severe corporeal punishment from the franklin had compelled him to submis-

sion, he proceeded to the sheepfold with a swelling heart, and throwing himself upon the ground, called aloud upon Thor and Woden to bring destruction upon Selwood and his whole household.

He paused, partly exhausted by the violence of his transport of fury, and partly, perhaps, from a sort of undefined expectation of receiving an answer to his vengeful invocation. It came; but neither in the uproar of the elements, nor the rush of the chariot wheels of the destroyer careering through the air; but in the soft low voice of compassionate expostulation. He raised his face from the earth, and perceived a stranger beside him, whose majestic form and mild countenance impressed him with the idea that he was a being of a different order from the rude and savage men with whom he had been accustomed to associate.

‘Unhappy boy !’ said the stranger, ‘upon whom hast thou called ?’

‘On the gods of my fathers,’ replied Guthred. ‘Those whom mine own people worshipped within the strong circles of their power, and on whose rough-hewn altars my father was wont to pour forth the blood of his slaughtered foes.’

The stranger shuddered. ‘Alas, poor child !’ said he, ‘and canst thou believe that such inhuman sacrifices could be acceptable to the beneficent Creator of

this beautiful world, which he has formed for the happiness and delight, of his creatures, whom he has commanded to love one another, and to worship him in the beauty of holiness, not with polluted hands and bloody rites ?'

Guthred looked perplexed, for the language of the stranger was incomprehensible to him. At length he said, 'It was to Thor and Woden these sacrifices were offered by my father. To them the savour of blood is sweet, for they are called the Destroyer and the Avenger. Oh that they would bring fire and sword upon the homestead of Selwood the Saxon !'

'Thy guilty prayer is such as might indeed be expected from the lips of a benighted worshipper of the powers of evil,' replied the stranger ; 'but know, my son, that in offering homage to Thor and Woden you are acting in direct rebellion to the Lord and Giver of Life, and the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, and are provoking his wrath to visit you with those maledictions which you impiously call down upon your enemies.'

'I cannot be more wretched than I am,' replied Guthred, 'nor suffer greater reverses : for I, who was born a prince, am now the slave of slaves.' He bowed his face once more upon the earth, and lifting up his voice, wept aloud.

The stranger allowed his passionate grief to vent itself, without interruption, for some moments, and then drawing Guthred to him, he addressed him in words of sympathy and encouragement.

The soothing tones, and language of compassion and tenderness, were new to the ears of the youthful slave; but they made their way to his heart, and melted the obdurate pride which had always prompted him to oppose violence to violence, and to return wrong for wrong, and with the confiding frankness of childhood, he flung himself into the arms of his unknown comforter, and wetted his bosom with his tears.

‘ You say you were born a prince,’ observed the stranger, after a pause. ‘ Whence come you ? ’

‘ From the land of the dark forest and the snow-clad mountain,’ replied Guthred, with a flushing cheek and kindling eye, from Lethra*, where my father, Hardacanute, was a king and a warrior; and I, his heir, was brought up on the knees of the valiant, served by the hands of the noble, and lulled to sleep by the songs of the bards, who told of the deeds of my great forefather, the mighty Odin, whose coal-black eye and raven hair, they said, resembled mine. But Halfdane and Hubba, the fierce sons of Regner Lodbrok, came, like a wintry torrent, spreading woe

* Lethra, a province of ancient Sweden.—PALGRAVE.

and desolation through my native Lethra, and having slain my sire, and burned his cities, they bore me, a helpless sorrowing child, from the place of my birth, and the kingdom I should have inherited, to their own detested land of Denmark, where Halfdane, the eldest of the fierce brethren, the same who now awes the trembling Northumbrian Saxons with the terror of his name, this Halfdane, I say, exchanged me with his hunting companion, Ricsig, for a wolf-hound, and Ricsig, in his turn, trucked me away to Selwood the Saxon, for a paltry drinking horn, as though I had been a thing of nought, a senseless utensil, or a beast of the field.'

'And how have you been treated in the household of the Saxon franklin?' demanded the stranger.

'With hard words and harder blows have I been driven forth to the performance of vile offices,' returned Guthred indignantly. 'A hewer of wood and a drawer of water have I been to sordid household queans, and a drudge in field and fold to the base churls who served my Saxon master, and with their injurious usage increased the bitterness of a prince's bondage. Pity have I had from no one save from thyself,' added he, in a softened tone, on perceiving the kindly drops which the tale of his sorrows had drawn from the benign eyes of the stranger. 'And who art thou that weepest for the woes of an alien and a slave?

Surely thou belongest not to the race of the unfeeling Saxon, or the savage Dane !'

' My name is Eadred,' replied the stranger, ' and, though of Saxon lineage, I am not, I trust, unfeeling, but the servant of One who is the friend of the friendless ; who hath, in His divine wisdom, for some good purpose, doubtless, brought thee hither, and hath sent me to thee with tidings of comfort.'

In reply to Guthred's eager inquiries, Eadred proceeded to reveal to him that God, of whose name and attributes he had hitherto remained in profound ignorance.

Guthred listened patiently, for the manners of the eloquent speaker had that mild persuasive charm which appeals resistlessly to every heart. He listened attentively, for the subject was one of powerful interest, conveyed as it was, in the impressive, but sublime simplicity of truth. He listened with delight, for the pure doctrines of Christianity were glad tidings to the desolate, heart-broken captive, to whom they offered better hopes of happiness in a future state of existence than the savage pleasure of quaffing mead and beer from the skulls of slaughtered foes, in the joyless valhalla, or heaven, of Scandinavian mythology ; and Guthred, the lineal descendant of the renowned Odin, who was honored as one of the

mightiest of the northern divinities, became a convert to the Christian faith.

Eadred frequently sought his young friend in the lonely pastures, where he kept the franklin's sheep, for the purpose of imparting to his powerful but uncultivated mind, the advantages of that learning which he was ably qualified to communicate ; for Eadred was a Saxon monk of distinguished talents and eminent acquirements, who resided in a neighboring convent, and employed himself in works of mercy and charity, and experienced a pure delight in diffusing the light of knowledge and religion, in succoring the distressed, and comforting the sorrowful. As his pupil, the hitherto fierce and intractable Guthred, became mild, reflective, and intelligent, the hours that he had been accustomed to waste in vain repining, listless insanity, or stormy bursts of passion, were now employed in study or heavenward meditation, which enabled him to correct the defects of his character, and to endure with resignation and fortitude the toil and persecution he occasionally had to bear. He no longer regretted the loss of power and dominion, for his mind was to him a kingdom, and the intercourses he enjoyed with the pious and accomplished Eadred, he would not have resigned for all the riches the world could bestow.

Books were then rare possessions, confined to the

libraries of convents, and but seldom to be met with in the cabinets of monarchs, yet Guthred, through the favor of his learned friend, was seldom without a roll of illuminated MS. in his bosom, wherewith to beguile his solitary hours, and sweeten the labors of the day. Nor were his studies confined to book-learning alone; he became an observer of the face of nature, and the characters of his fellow men.

‘Knowledge is power,’ Lord Bacon in later times has said, and the enslaved Guthred, the servant of servants, as he, in the bitterness of his soul had aptly styled himself, acquired with his growing wisdom such influence over the minds of those around him, that he became as it were the oracle of the household and neighborhood. His sayings were quoted, his advice solicited, and his judgment appealed to, in all cases where parties were at issue or difficulties occurred.

Like the captive Hebrew in the house of the Egyptian lord, every thing appeared to prosper with him. The flocks and herds of Selwood increased, and his crops were more abundant; plenty was without, and peace within the dwelling, where the master mind of the young slave, as he approached to manhood, manifested its superiority over the ignorant serfs and ceorls, by the improvements he suggested, and the good order he contributed to establish and maintain. But these

days of tranquillity were not to last. The growing wealth of Selwood excited the cupidity of the Danish hordes in the neighborhood, who, taking advantage of a dispute among themselves, in which they pretended that the inhabitants of Whitingham had interfered, poured down upon the devoted Saxons, plundered their dwellings, drove away their flocks and herds, and put every man to the sword who dared to offer resistance to their lawless rapacity.

When Guthred, who had been sent by his master on a message of trust to receive a sum of money from the monks of Rindisfairne for a drove of fat bullocks, returned to Whitingham, he found the home-stead in ashes, the lands harried, the flocks and herds gone, and his mistress sitting on her ruined hearth-stone, weeping over the mangled corse of the murdered franklin, her husband; deserted by serfs and thralls, they having taken advantage of her calamity to provide for their own interests; and even abandoned by her niece and sole relative, Swindreda, that damsel having taken a fancy to one of the Danish plunderers, with whom she departed to the Danelagh.

It was then that Guthred found occasion for the exercise of those principles of Christian benevolence, which had been inculcated by the pious Eadred. That beloved friend was indeed lost to him, for the convent had been plundered and burned by the fero-

rious Danes, and no trace of the monks or their peaceful and useful occupations remained ; but the precepts of Eadred remained indelibly impressed on the tablets of Guthred's heart, whose first impulse was to bestow such consolation and assistance as it was in his power to offer to the broken-hearted widow.

Poor Winifred, who had not expected to receive that sympathy and succour from the foreign thrall which had been denied by those from whom she had most reason to expect it, lifted up her voice, and blessed him with the blessing of the widow and the destitute.

When Guthred had consigned the bleeding remains of his murdered master to a grave, which he dug for him beneath the umbrage of one of the noble elms that had formerly overshadowed the low-roofed but pleasant dwelling, he conducted his sorrowing mistress to a miserable shieling, or cottage, that had escaped the general conflagration which had consumed house, barns, and cattle sheds ; but, notwithstanding all his care and consideration, Winifred must have perished of want, had it not been for the sum which Guthred had received from the monks of Lindisfairne for his deceased master, and which he now, with scrupulous fidelity, delivered to the astonished widow.

‘ Keep it, my son,’ said she, ‘ and use it for our mutual benefit ; surely it will be safer in thy hands

than in mine, and will prosper under thy management.'

Guthred applied this little store with such prudence and success, and used such unremitting personal exertions, in improving the widow's mite, that, by degrees, her desolate dwelling began to wear an air of comfort, and at length she found herself the mistress of a productive little farm, with kine, sheep, swine, and poultry, sufficient for her use.

Guthred, who found a sweet satisfaction in administering to her comforts, was repaid a thousand fold by the tender affection with which he was regarded by the grateful widow, who was to him as a mother.

Northumbria continued the theatre of petty intestine wars, not only between its rival population of Saxons and Danes, but of fierce dissensions among the Danes themselves, who, since the death of Half-dane, their leader, and the overthrow and slaughter of his brother Hubba (the sons of Regner Lodbrok, and chief governors of the Danelagh), had not been able to agree among themselves respecting the choice of a successor to the sovereign authority, not one of the royal line of Odin remaining among their hordes.

But the wars and rumors of wars, which spread desolation, bloodshed, and terror, through country and town of this unfortunate district, disquieted not the humble cottage where the widowed Winifred and her

thrall, Guthred, found shelter and contentment. There were moments, perhaps, when Guthred felt disposed to regret that his talents and acquirements had no nobler sphere for their exercise than the occupations of a shepherd or husbandman ; but then the reflection that he was engaged in the virtuous performance of the duties of that state to which it had pleased his heavenly Father to call him, checked the rebellious suggestions of ambition and discontent, and he returned to his toils with the pious conviction, that, if it were the will of God that the hand that ought to have wielded a sceptre should be doomed to guide a plough in an obscure corner of a foreign land, it was right that it should be so. But other things were in store for the royal orphan, who had been prepared in the school of adversity for a better inheritance than that which was his birthright.

One morning, on returning from the field to breakfast, he found Winifred attired in her best black kirtle, surcoat, and hood, and busily engaged in smoothing, with an iron, the plaits and coarse embroidery on the back and shoulders of his sabbath super-tunic, which garment was made of coarse home-spun white linen, precisely similar in all respects to the long open frocks worn in the present day by wagoners. ‘ How now, my good mother,’ said Guthred with a smile, for by that endearing name he had long been accustomed to

address her, ‘ what makes you so full of business with my best ‘ parelling ’ to-day ? To-morrow is neither Sunday nor a saint’s day, you know.’

‘ No matter, my son,’ replied Winifred, ‘ there is to be a goodly show and a great festival at Oswindune, for the Danes and Saxons are tired of their quarrels and evil doings, and have resolved to choose a king of Northumberland by mutual agreement, this blessed day, to put an end to bloodshed and deadly debate ; and Ulph, the miller, of Whitingham, who hath just told me the glad tidings, hath promised to lend us one of his grist carts and the old pied mare, that we may go thither like our neighbors to view the joyful sight.’

‘ My dear mother,’ said Guthred, ‘ those will be wisest who keep at home on such a day, especially women folk and Saxons, believe me ; for such a meeting is far more likely to create deadly debates than to end them ; and then the sword and the battle-axe will be the umpires that will decide any quarrel that may arise : for as to the Danes and Saxons agreeing in any thing, much less on a matter of such importance as the choice of a king, it is not to be expected ; therefore, their assembly will only be the cause of bloodshed, so, dear mother, be persuaded by me, and go not thither to-day.’

‘ Nay ! nay ! my son, thou art, for once, mistaken in thy judgment,’ said Winifred, ‘ for our people and

the Danes have already in the wise determination of leaving the nomination of their mutual governor to our good king Alfred and the pious bishop of Lindisfairne, who will both be present, they say ; and if we go not to Oswindune to-day, we may never again enjoy the felicity of looking upon such a king and such a prelate. Besides,' added she, on observing that Guthred was about to offer some fresh objection, ' I am resolved on going, whether you approve of it or not ; for I have lived under the shadow of this poor shieling in the depth of a wood, lo ! this seven years, and seen neither feast nor festival since the day of my sad widowhood, and 'tis time now, I wot, that I should enjoy some pastime ; so, if thou likest not to drive the pied mare, I will e'en ask Ulph the miller to give me a seat in his great meal wagon, with the rest of the gossips and neighbors, who are going to see this blessed sight.'

' Well, mother,' replied Guthred, ' if you are thus bent on going, I am your thrall, you know, and bound to do your bidding ; and even were that not the case, I would attend you for love's sake, especially as there may be danger.'

Winifred, in high good humor at having carried her point, packed up a store of oaten cakes, cheese, and dried mutton, to which she added a bottle of her best metheglin, as a store for the journey, while

Guthred combed his long dark ringlets, washed his face and hands, and donned his snowy super-tunic and fox-fur cap, in readiness to attend his mistress.

The roads were like all roads in those days, of a very rough description, full of deep ruts and holes, here and there mended with rough blocks of stone, or the trunks of trees laid side by side. The grist cart was an uncouth, and, what was worse, a jolting conveyance, and the miller's old pied mare a sorry jade ; nevertheless, the day was so fine, and they met with such abundance of good company on the road, that both mistress and slave were in the best possible spirits, and were willing to overlook all inconveniences, and only to dwell on the agreeable part of the journey.

When they drew near the scene of action, Winifred was greatly amused by examining the various cavalades of Danish holdas in their burnished armor, over which flowed silken mantles, and their long red tresses braided with gems and threads of gold,—for the Danes, notwithstanding their ferocious and barbarous manners, affected great nicety in dress, and were the fops of the ninth century ; the gallantly armed and mounted Saxon thanes, with their courtly yet warlike bearing, and festal array, each attended by a train of martial followers ; the bands of wealthy franklins, and sturdy ceorls, with their wives and families ; even the poor serfs and craftsmen of low degree were flock-

ing from all directions to the spot. Besides these were gleemen with harps ; travelling jugglers with apes and bears ; morrice dancers ; and itinerants of various descriptions, with their tempting wares, mingling in the motley groups.

The simple Winifred, who had never seen half so many grand people in the whole course of her life, was, in her ecstasies, ready to leap out of the grist cart with delight one moment, and the next inclined to rate the prudent Guthred soundly, for having endeavored to prevent her from enjoying the pleasure of so brave a spectacle.

‘ All is well that ends well,’ was his only reply to her reproaches.

‘ All must end well that hath so joyous a beginning,’ cried Winifred, ‘ for lo ! how lovingly are the Danish holdas riding with our noble thanes, and their grim spearsmen behave like brethren to the ceorls and milk maidens. O, it was never so seen in my time ! or my poor dear Selwood had not been barbarously slain, only for withstanding the foul robbers from plundering his homestead ! but the Lord hath turned their wolfish hearts since then, I trow !’

‘ Or rather, the victorious arm of our noble Alfred hath taught them the necessity of adopting better manners,’ rejoined Guthred, smiling. ‘ The Saxon

hath the best of it now, good mother, or the Danes had never consented to adopt a king of his choosing ; but the truth of it is, Alfred's valor and Alfred's wisdom have so completely broken the power of the Danelagh, that their leaders are happy to accede to any terms he may choose to impose, as a condition of being allowed to remain in possession of the lands they have acquired in Northumbria.'

When they arrived at Oswindune, Winifred expresed an earnest desire to obtain a sight of the holy bishop of Lindisfairne ; but, as he was surrounded by Saxon thanes and Danish chiefs, with whom he was discussing the important business on which this assembly had been convened, there would have been little chance of her wish being gratified, had it not been for the impertinence of the jester of a Danish holda, who, perceiving that his master was exceedingly amused at poor Winifred's equipage, maliciously rattled his bauble about the ears of the pied mare, which so terrified the animal, that, becoming perfectly unmanageable, she started off at headlong speed, and, in spite of all Guthred's efforts to restrain her, carried the grist cart, with himself and Winifred, into the very centre of the privileged circle that surrounded the bishop of Lindisfairne.

The arrival of this unexpected addition to the national council appeared so thoroughly ridiculous to

all parties, that Saxons and Danes alike indulged in the most immoderate bursts of laughter, while some of the younger of both nations were found sufficiently ill-mannered and undignified as to make sport for their companions, by scornfully calling their attention to the long tresses, indicative of high rank, which Guthred wore flowing over the coarse array of a peasant, and which ill assorted with the badge of thraldom on his neck. Others, still more annoying, drew near, and goaded the startled mare on every side. Guthred on this, perceiving that his mistress's personal safety was greatly imperilled by the kicking and plunging of the enraged animal, sprang from the cart, and seizing the head rein, attempted to lead the mare out of the press. The rude chiefs closed around the cart, to prevent the escape of the objects of their amusement.

Guthred on this, mildly but boldly addressed himself to both Saxons and Danes, requesting them to desist from tormenting the mare ; ' for,' said he, ' the poor animal will receive some injury ; and although she be but a sorry beast, it behoves us to be careful of her, for, my masters, she is a borrowed one.'

This explanation was received with noisy shouts of mirth, the annoyances were redoubled on every side, while both Saxons and Danes bade Guthred stand back, and not presume to interrupt their pastime.

Guthred boldly maintained his ground, and, brandishing his oaken quarter-staff, avowed his intention of defending his mistress and the miller's mare from all aggressions.

The imperious nobles of both nations were astonished and enraged at the hardihood displayed by a peasant's thrall, in daring singly to resist the will of powerful chiefs and magnates ; and a gigantic holda, whose mature years and high rank ought to have restrained him from engaging in such proceedings, was preparing to deal the dauntless Guthred a blow with the heavy handle of his battle-axe, which must have prostrated him, had not Winifred, who perceived his intention, and recognised his person at the same moment, called out, ' It doth ill become thee to pay in such base coin, methinks, for the plum porridge and metheglin with which thou wert feasted at the board of my husband, Selwood.'

' Just ten years agone, good wife, I think,' returned Ricsig (for it was no other). ' I remember thee now by the token of that shrill voice of thine ; and, for the sake of the excellent plum porridge and metheglin whereof thou speakest, the like of which I have not tasted since, I will now stand thy friend, and help thee and thy son to a place whence thou mayest see the bishop, and hear him speak.'

Winifred was profuse in her acknowledgements to the holda ; but, with the pride that formed a prominent part of her character, she thought proper to inform him that the young man was not her son, but her thrall. ‘ The very lad,’ pursued she, ‘ whom you gave to my poor dear husband, Selwood, for his carved ivory drinking horn.’

Notwithstanding all Guthred’s magnanimity and acquired philosophy, he felt mortified at the feeling of littleness in his mistress, which prompted her to make this communication to the holda ; and he thought from the eager manner in which his former master turned about and scrutinized him from head to foot, that it was more than probable he might think proper to reclaim him. But Ricsig, clapping his hands together, shouted in a loud voice, ‘ He is found, Bishop ! the lost son of Hardacanute, the last of the godlike race of Odin, the king whom you have named and we have chosen, is here ! Behold, ye valiant Danes, the dark eyes and raven hair of the royal line of the ‘ king of men,’ whose descendants alone are meet to sway a Danish sceptre. Lo ! Ricsig, the son of Kingvar, is the first to bow the knee before him in homage.’

The bishop of Lindisfairne, at these words, descended from the rude episcopal throne, which had been

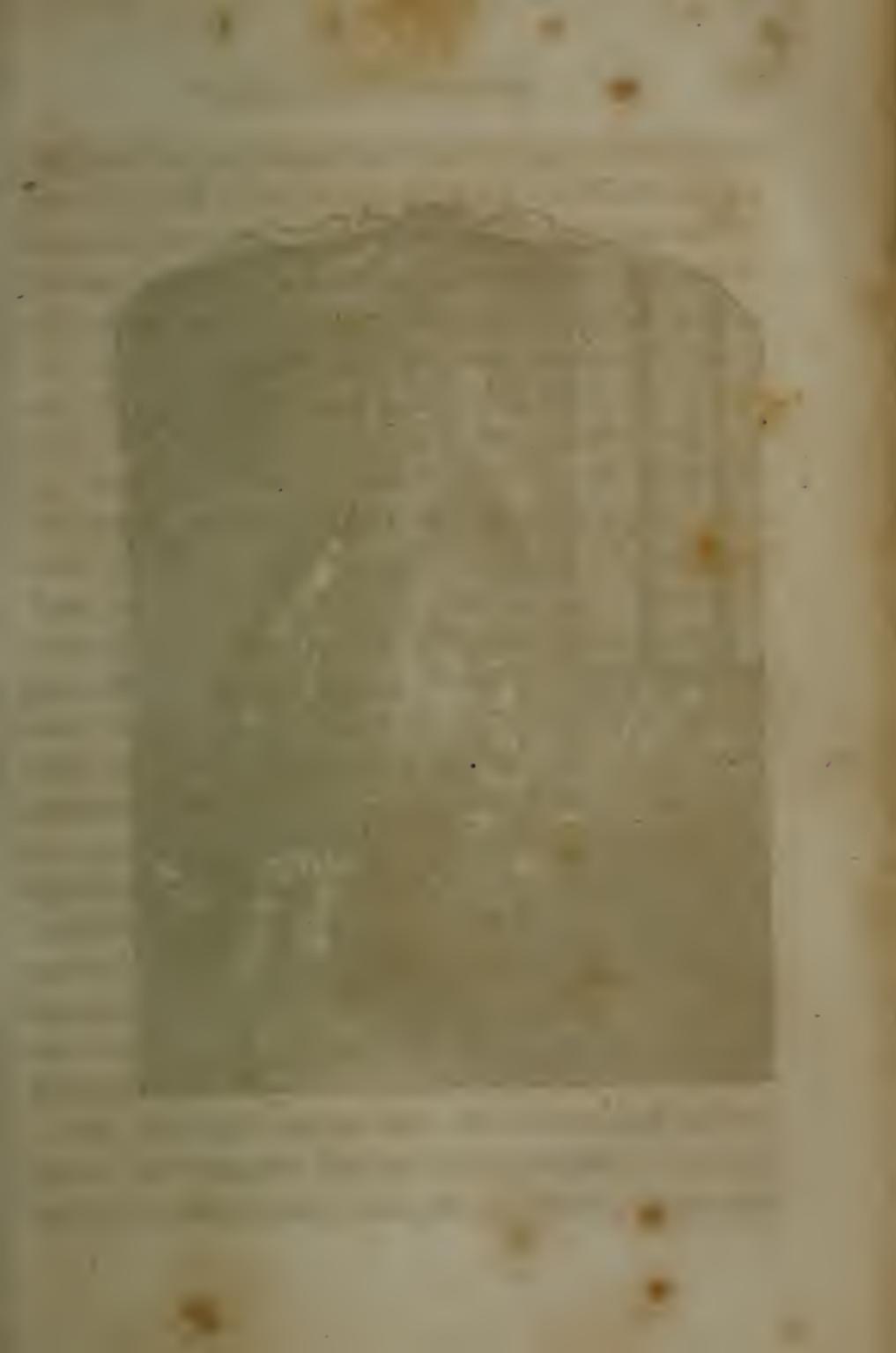
raised for him on the green turf, and, revealing to the astonished eyes of Guthred the dearly loved and unforgotten features of his friend and instructor, Eadred, folded him to his bosom for a moment ; then, amidst the mingling acclamations of Saxons and Danes, conducted him to the summit of the hill of Oswindune, where the royal inaugurations of the Northumbrian monarchs always took place, and, pouring the consecrated oil on his head, exchanged the iron badge of thraldom for the golden bracelets and circlet of royalty, and presented him to the mixed multitude of Northumbrian Danes and Saxons as their king.

To the enfranchised slave, so lately the sport of adverse fortune, this sudden elevation appeared like a strange dream ; but, when he was admitted into the presence of the royal Alfred, to swear the oath of fealty to him as his liege lord, he learned from his lips that he had been long marked by him to fill the vassal throne of Northumbria on the recommendation of his friend and counsellor, the bishop of Lindisfairne, who had educated and (unknown to himself) fitted him for the discharge of royal duties, while he wore the iron badge of servitude. Nor did Guthred, when intrusted with the awful responsibility of despotic power, prove unworthy of the confidence reposed in him. The illustrious Alfred found in him a faithful friend, and an able coadjutor in establishing

equitable laws, reforming abuses, and diffusing the pure light of Christianity through a semi-barbarous land, and introducing the refinements and virtues of civilisation among the rugged race over which he reigned, in peace and prosperity, during many years.

Guthred's first exercise of regal authority was to raise his friend and instructor, Eadred, to the bishopric of Durham, which he richly endowed ; nor was he forgetful of his old mistress, Winifred, whom he cherished with the greatest tenderness, and watched over her declining years with the dutiful affection of a son.







THE ROYAL BROTHERS.

THE fitful sunbeams of an April day of smiles and showers streamed brightly through the richly-stained glass of the high arched windows of a stately apartment in Ludlow Castle, and cast a sort of changeful glory on the mild and thoughtful features of a youth apparently about twelve years old, who was seated in a crimson canopied chair fringed with gold, before a carved ebony reading table covered with books and illuminated writings, and was deeply engaged in the perusal of a folio, printed on vellum, and bound in rose-coloured velvet, clasped and studded with gold, and emblazoned on either side with the royal arms of England.

The youthful student was of a sweet and serious aspect, the singular beauty of his person being less worthy of observation than the noble and ingenuous

expression of his countenance, which indicated habits of reflection and intellectual graces beyond his age.

He was attired in a style of regal magnificence, wearing a robe of purple velvet lined with ermine, a cap of the same material turned up with a similar fur, and adorned with the white rose badge of York. His doublet and long hose were of white damask, embroidered with gold and fastened with jewelled studs. He wore, according to the fashion of the fifteenth century, boots of black velvet, with long pointed toes projecting several inches beyond the feet and turned upwards.

The jewelled collar and glittering insignia of the garter on the neck of one so young, no less than his princely air and bearing, bespoke him a child of no ordinary lineage—he was, in fact, the heir of England, Edward Prince of Wales, eldest son of King Edward the Fourth.

He had been sent by his royal father, under the care of his maternal uncle the accomplished Earl of Rivers, and other distinguished personages, on a progress through Wales, under the idea that his appearance among them would have some influence in appeasing the discontents of the disaffected inhabitants of that portion of his dominions, who had always been the firmest adherents of the rival house of Lancaster.

The Earl of Rivers, having succeeded in some degree in composing the disorderly and turbulent state of the country, had retired with his royal charge to Ludlow Castle in Shropshire, the ancient stronghold of the Prince's ancestors, the Earls of March, where those powerful border lords had been accustomed, from the early times of the Plantagenet dynasty, to reign in a sort of feudal territory of their own, paying a doubtful homage to the King of England, and carrying terror and desolation into the dominions of the Welsh princes, with whom they were almost always engaged in a predatory warfare.

In this fortress it was King Edward's intention that his son should keep court during the spring and summer months, under the tutelage of his uncle Rivers; and the Prince, far from regretting an arrangement which deprived him of the gay companionships of his age and the splendor of his father's court, (then the most magnificent in Europe), was rejoiced to avail himself of the opportunity which the almost unbroken quiet and solitude of Ludlow Castle afforded for the pursuit of his studies. This unwearied application to the improvement of his mind, to which he had been trained, assisted, and encouraged, by the instruction and example of his learned uncle the Earl of Rivers, was a matter of surprise to the uneducated nobles and gentlemen of his train, who had been appoin-

ted for the most part by King Edward to accompany the prince on this expedition, on account of their war-like reputation and their known attachment to his House, for the purpose of holding the insurgent Welsh chieftains in awe, and were not very likely to appreciate the charms of learning, or to consider the cultivation of the mind as a matter of much importance.

‘I begin to be heartily weary of our dull sojourn in this gloomy stronghold of the fierce Mortimers, your ancestors, Prince Edward, do not you?’ said a handsome gaily dressed young man, who had stood for some minutes at the elbow of the Prince, endeavoring, but in vain, to attract his attention from his books by whistling and talking to a falcon that was perched on his wrist.

‘If I could find no better pastime than feeding my falcon, playing with my dogs, and occasionally visiting my steed in his stall, or riding him forth in company with other youths whose best employment is *idlesse*, perhaps I might be, Richard Grey,’ replied the prince, smiling archly upon the querist, who was his half-brother, the youngest son of the queen by her first husband, Sir John Grey of Groby.

‘Well, but Edward, my royal brother,’ pursued he, ‘your health is very precious, and the king your father, when he did me the honour of investing me with the office of your chamberlain, charged me to have

particular care that you injured it not by excessive study, or any other intemperance, and therefore it is my bounden duty to warn you against such.'

'Seasonable occupation of the mind is good for the body, which is never healthy in a state of sinful indolence,' replied the prince.

'I had as lief be in a monastery or in a prison at once, as to pass my days in the dull confinement of poring over old chronicles and codes of laws in a silent chamber, as you do, my fair brother,' said the Lord Grey.

'It is my duty so to prepare my mind, by storing it with useful information against the time when I may be too much occupied with the busy cares of a public life to enjoy the leisure, that I am willing to employ as you see,' replied the prince.

'A game of tennis in the court below would be a much pleasanter way of employing both mind and body, my dear lord,' rejoined the other; 'or what say you of going forth with the hawks to-day?'

'And so to disturb the pretty birds in their happy season of love, and belike to deprive the helpless nestlings of the cherishing care of some of their parents for our cruel sport: call you that pleasure, Richard Grey? Alack, good Richard, I trow you never knew the true meaning of the word,' said the prince.

At that moment the shrill notes of a trumpet were heard at a distance, from the London road.

‘An express! a royal express!’ cried Lord Grey, clapping his hands; ‘now I trow we shall have something to think of, and something to do, better than leading the lives of unfrocked monks in this gloomy abode.’

‘Ah! Richard! Richard!’—began the prince—‘My dear lord,’ interrupted the volatile youth, ‘you must forgive me for leaving you in the very beginning of your sermon; but I must indeed go find our uncle Rivers, that there may be no needless delay in opening the mail.’

‘Why so impatient?’ said the prince; ‘the courier is almost a mile distant, I can tell by the faintness of the blast;’ but his companion was already gone. Prince Edward’s eye reverted to the page of the chronicle of Sir John Froissart, which he was perusing previous to the interruption he had received from his thoughtless relative, and in the course of a few moments he was so deeply engrossed in the lively and chivalric details of the splendid reign of the third Edward, as to be wholly unconscious of the arrival of the courier, whose approach indeed he had wholly forgotten, till a tumultuous sound of thronging footsteps, and a general buzz of eager voices in the gallery leading to the apartment, announcing that

some extraordinary intelligence had been received, recalled it to his remembrance.

‘May I be permitted to be the first to offer the homage of the most loving of your lieges to your royal Grace,’ said the Earl of Rivers, who now entered with Lord Grey, and bending his knee to his youthful nephew, saluted him by the title of ‘Edward the Fifth, King of England.’

‘Your salutation, my sweet uncle, implieth heavy tidings,’ said the young king, bursting into tears; ‘and if you knew how sadly it soundeth in mine ears, you would not smile upon me thus.’

‘My royal nephew is to blame in taking the will of God which calls him to a throne as a grievous dispensation,’ observed the Earl of Rivers to the Lord Richard Grey, the king’s half-brother, who stood anxiously regarding the sorrowful countenance of the new monarch, and endeavoring by many caresses to soothe his passionate grief.

‘Marry, my lord, I think so,’ replied the youthful noble. ‘The death of our late lord, King Edward of glorious memory, albeit it was somewhat before the ordinary course of nature, was after a peaceful fashion, and not cut short by treason, or accident, or any violent means, which can be said of few princes in these bloody and troubrous times; and we understand, moreover, from the letters of the queen, my

royal mother, that he died in an odour of sanctity, deeply repenting him of the blood he had shed in the course of the long and perilous struggle he maintained before he could wrest his rightful inheritance from the usurping house of Lancaster ; and, therefore, we doubt not that he now sleepeth in the sure hope of a blessed resurrection, in which it behoveth all his true friends and loving children to rejoice rather than to weep.'

‘ Ah, Richard !’ said the king sorrowfully, ‘ it is not so easy to reconcile an affectionate child to the loss of a parent and protector. Tell me, fair brother, did you, and your brother Dorset, take the death of your valiant father, Sir John Grey, so lightly ? ’

‘ Marry, my liege, no ; but our case was widely different, for he was slain in the bloody field of Barnet, fighting against his rightful sovereign our late lord King Edward, of glorious memory ; and his death and the ruin of his cause involved the forfeiture of lands and heritage, leaving our mother and ourselves in a state of destitution ; while you, my royal lord, are called by the removal of the king, your father, to the enjoyment of regal dignity, and the fulfilment, as I trust, of a glorious and happy destiny. What say ye, my masters ? ’ continued he, turning to some of the knights and nobles, who now entered

to pay their court to their sovereign, ‘is it not, think ye, a brave thing to be a king?’

The courtiers were voluble in their assurances that it must be a most enviable lot.

‘Did Edward the Second, Richard the Second, and Henry the Sixth, find it so?’ demanded the young monarch with a sigh.

‘My dear lord, why name those unhappy men?’ said the Earl of Rivers. ‘The misfortunes of the two first were the natural results of their follies and vices, and the last was a usurper, you know.’

‘Did your brave grandfather, Sir Anthony Woodville, consider him in that light when he lost his life in the battle of St. Albans, fighting in his cause?’ said the king, ‘or did you, fair uncle, who have so often worn the red rose of Lancaster in bloody fields, so regard the sovereign in whose quarrel you fought?’

‘Fie! fie! my liege, you are too sharp in your retorts,’ whispered the Earl in some confusion, on observing a half suppressed sigh from those around. ‘See you not,’ continued he, ‘the looks which those, who grudge at the advancement of your mother’s kindred, exchange with each other, on hearing such ill-judged allusions to our former politics?’

‘Well, well, good uncle, I meant not to offend you by my plainness of speech, and I crave your pardon,

returned the king ; then rising from his seat and bowing graciously to his uncle and his little court, he said, 'I pray your indulgence, my loving lieges, and trust you will hold me excused for receiving in a sorrowful guise, the homage, which, however prized by me, having been dearly purchased by a father's death, cannot be otherwise than painful in the first moments of affliction, on account of that most sorrowful bereavement.' He covered his face with his hands as he concluded, and withdrew to an inner apartment.

The royal retinue left Ludlow Castle on the following day, the queen-mother having directed her brother, the Earl of Rivers, to bring the young king, his nephew, to London with all convenient speed, attended by a trusty body of troops, which she begged him to raise forthwith, to protect the youthful monarch from the evil designs of Richard duke of Gloucester, the late king's brother, who had long been at enmity with all her family, and was by them suspected of aiming at the crown.

Meantime, that subtle politician, whose crooked policy rendered him extremely eager to get the person of the young king into his possession, having by his artful letters and deceitful promises succeeded in beguiling the queen, who was an exceedingly weak woman, into writing once more to her brother, revoking her prudent directions respecting the young

king's guard, set off post haste, attended by his friend the Duke of Buckingham, and a considerable body of armed men, in hopes of intercepting his royal nephew, and his trusty friends, on the road to London.

When the young king and his company approached the town of Northampton, where they designed to pass the night, they had the mortification of learning that it was full of soldiers, the followers and hired retainers of the Dukes of Gloucester and Buckingham. As these were the declared foes of his family, the Earl of Rivers considered he had sufficient cause for uneasiness at this intelligence ; but while he halted to deliberate on the best mode of proceeding in this dilemma, the two dukes, attended by a few gentlemen only, rode up, and, to his surprise, greeted him in a very friendly manner, and after assuring him it was their earnest wish to forget old grudges and every cause of displeasure that had arisen during the reign of the late king, they said they had rode forward to let him know that Northampton was ill provided for the reception of the royal retinue, as it was already occupied by their followers and retainers, and almost destitute of provisions, and therefore they advised him to carry the king on to Stony Stratford, which was twelve miles nearer to London, and contained excellent accommodations of every kind.

The Earl of Rivers and his friends considered this

a much preferable plan for their royal charge than his passing the night at Northampton, where he would be so entirely in the power of the strong party of Gloucester. He assured the two dukes 'that this arrangement would be perfectly agreeable both to himself and the king, neither of whom had the slightest wish either to deprive them of their quarters in Northampton, or to run the risk of a quarrel between their followers about the accommodations, which might arise if they resolved to pass the night in a town too small to hold them all with comfort.'

'It was the fear of such a misunderstanding that led me to propose the measure you have so courteously adopted, my Lord Rivers,' said the Duke of Gloucester, 'for debates between serving folk do too oft lead to deadly strife among their masters, seeing that each party, in repeating the tale of their real or imaginary wrongs' doth ever pretend that the quarrel began with injurious mention of them, by which means they obtain their suffrages.'

'In confirmation of your observation, my lord Duke,' said the Earl of Rivers, 'we have only to recall a circumstance, almost within the memory of some present, to wit, the quarrel between the serving men of the Cardinal Beaufort and his nephew, the Protector Duke Humphrey of Gloucester, which bred such fierce hatred between those near kinsmen and

mighty princes as led to the murder of the latter, which was, in my humble opinion, the preliminary step to the downfall of the house of Lancaster.'

'Your lordship is, of course, a better judge of Lancasterian politics than I can pretend to be,' observed the Duke of Gloucester drily, 'but we will not introduce a topic so likely to produce differences between those whose interest it is to remain friends. In sooth, my lord, we now are, I trust, united in one sentiment of love and duty to that precious child, who is so equally near to us both in blood, our hopeful king, whom I am longing to embrace, and purpose, God willing, to visit at Stony Stratford, to pay my loving duty unto him.'

'You will be dearly welcome to his Grace, my lord duke,' replied the Earl, 'and I will ride forward, with pleasure, to advertise King Edward of your approach.'

'I will propose a better plan, my lord,' said the Duke, 'which is, for you to give my friends and myself the pleasure of your company to sup with us, and pass the night at Northampton, to cement our reconciliation, and in the morning we will ride together to Stratford, to pay our duty to our royal nephew.'

'Agreed,' said the Earl, who was not willing to prejudice the interests of the young king by appearing distrustful of the Duke of Gloucester's overtures of

friendship; and, having sent a confidential messenger to inform Lord Grey and Sir Thomas Vaughan of the arrangement, directed them to proceed with the king to Stony Stratford, and there to tarry till he should rejoin them in the morning with the Duke of Gloucester, he accompanied the latter into the town of Northampton, where he supped cheerfully, and passed the greater part of the night in friendly and confidential intercourse, circulating the wine cup with his former enemies. At a late hour he retired to repose at a commodious inn that had been appointed for his reception in the town, suspecting no evil design from those who had lavished so many marks of regard upon him.

The sequel shows how unworthy they were of his confidence, for no sooner had he retired to rest, than they secured the keys of the inn where he was sleeping, and posted a number of armed men on the road between Northampton and Stony Stratford, to prevent any one from entering that town to give the alarm to the young king and Earl Rivers's friends and followers.

At break of day, when they were ready to mount, the Earl was still in bed and asleep, but one of his attendants finding that no one was permitted to leave the inn, suspected treachery, and came hastily to awake him, and acquaint him with the dilemma they

were in. The fearful consequence of the imprudence, of which he had been guilty, flashed upon the Earl's mind, and hurrying on his clothes, he ordered one of the doors to be forced open, and proceeded, in some anger, to inquire of the two dukes the cause of his attempted detention. He found them in the very humor to give and take offence. The game was now in their own hands, and they only wanted a pretext for coming to an open rupture with him. High words presently arose on both sides, the Duke of Gloucester upbraided him with endeavoring to alienate the affections of the young king from his nearest relations and most faithful subjects; and refusing to listen to any explanation or justification, he concluded by arresting him, and giving him into the custody of some of his attendants, and without paying the slightest regard to his protestations against such treacherous usage, he, with the Duke of Buckingham, mounted and rode off to Stony Stratford, to join the king.

They found the young monarch in a melancholy mood, still lamenting over the recent loss of the king his father. He received his uncle, the Duke of Gloucester, with much respect, and courteously accepted the homage which he and the Duke of Buckingham, with great profession of duty and loyal affection, offered him; but there was a visible shade of premature care and sorrow on his youthful brow, and

his eyes were frequently turned towards the door with an expression that plainly indicated his anxious expectation of some one who came not. At length the Duke of Gloucester addressed him in these words :— ‘ Fair nephew and my lord, I have been at the pains of coming hither with a goodly appointed band of armed men and sundry honorable knights and gentle-
ties, in order that I might attend your grace to London, and enjoy the satisfaction of presenting you to the good citizens of London as their king.’

‘ I am grateful for your loving care and courtesy, my lord,’ replied the young king with a deep sigh.

‘ And,’ rejoined the Duke, ‘ as it is near unto high noon, I hold it time for us to mount and be going.’

‘ With your leave, my lord,’ replied the king, ‘ I purpose tarrying for my uncle Rivers, who left our company last night to hold conference with your lordship at Northampton ; after which I received a message, purporting to be from him, advertising me that it was his intention to sup with you and my lord of Buckingham, at your lodgings in that town ; but pledging himself to be with me at an early hour this morning, and I marvel much that he hath not kept his promise. I hope no misadventure hath befallen him.’

‘ Most probably my lord of Gloucester can best explain the reason of our noble uncle’s delay, my royal brother,’ said the young lord Grey, casting a glance

of unequivocal meaning upon the Duke of Gloucester.

‘The explanation you desire, my fair sir,’ returned the duke, ‘shall be given in a very few words. Your uncle Rivers is at present at Northampton, in safe keeping.’

‘In safe keeping!’ echoed Lord Grey fiercely, laying hand on his sword, ‘who has dared to put restraint upon his noble person?’

The young king, in milder language, but with much emotion, repeated his brother’s question: a fearful suspicion of the truth flashing upon his mind, and blanching his cheek to a deadly paleness as he spoke.

‘I entreat of your grace to be composed,’ said the Duke of Gloucester, ‘for, in sooth, you are much to blame to agitate yourself on the account of a false traitor, whom my tender concern for your weal hath compelled me to place under restraint for a few days, lest his evil practices should alienate the affections of your loyal subjects from you, and you should be left, like Rehoboam, with only a remnant of the flourishing kingdom bequeathed by your father.’

‘It is not—it cannot be my trusty, my loving uncle Rivers, of whom you speak, my lord,’ exclaimed the king in a tone of great distress. ‘Some villain hath

belied him,' continued he, 'but I will be his surety, and pledge my royal word on his loyalty to me and mine.'

'Tut! tut! tut! your grace is a child, and no competent judge of such matters,' retorted the Duke of Gloucester, 'and since you are so foolishly blind to the vile arts and treasonable practices of your maternal kinsman, it is, methinks, high time that persons of maturer age, and greater discretion than can be expected at your tender years, should assist you in guiding the helm of state for awhile; and I, as the only brother of your father, the late king, am generally considered, by your best friends and most faithful subjects, as your fittest guardian, however you may prefer the guidance of Rehoboam's counsellors to your own ruin.'

'As my father's honored brother, and my superior in age and wisdom, I am in duty bound to listen with submission to your reproofs, my lord duke,' replied the king, bursting into tears; 'but it is not the bitterness of your taunts that shall prevent me from maintaining the innocence of my good uncle Rivers, and demanding his instant enlargement.'

'Spoken like a king and a Plantagenet, my royal brother,' exclaimed Lord Grey, with kindling eyes.

'Like a rash inconsiderate boy, who is bent on his own destruction, rather,' observed the Duke of

Gloucester, in a low stern voice. ‘ But come, my liege, to horse ; the day wears apace, and delay is useless.’

‘ But my uncle, my dear, dear uncle Rivers ! ’ cried the king, wringing his hands. ‘ Only restore him to me, and I will be obedient to all your wishes, uncle Gloucester.’

‘ Nay, marry, my liege, that is the very way to render you otherwise. Your uncle Rivers, that false traitor, hath been too long about you for your own weal. He hath taught you to distrust your real friends, and, therefore, he must be removed from you a season.’

‘ Ah, Richard ! ’ said the young monarch, turning with tearful eyes to his half-brother, Lord Grey, ‘ you told me, not three days ago, that it was a brave thing to be a king, and called my followers to bear me witness of the same. What say you to it now ? ’

‘ Say ! ’ muttered Lord Grey between his shut teeth, ‘ why, that were I a king, I would on such injurious usage to my friends and kinsmen assert my prerogative, and let yon misshapen railer know who was his master.’

‘ Whist, Richard, whist ! ’ whispered Sir Thomas Vaughan, pointing to the armed men who filled the court yard, ‘ see you not the wild boar hath his tusks prepared to rend us. For the love of all the saints, urge not the young king to chafe him, for the Duke

will gladly embrace any pretext for strife since he is the strongest.'

Lord Grey bit his lip, and with ill dissembled discontent prepared to follow his royal brother, when, in obedience of a second impatient summons to mount from the Duke of Gloucester, Edward rose and led the way to the court yard. The Duke of Buckingham, who had hitherto been a passive agent in the scene, now started forward with officious haste to hold the king's stirrup, and contrived to engage him in conversation as they rode through the town ; and by flattering him with hopes of his uncle's speedy release, so completely beguiled his attention from what was passing in the rear of the cavalcade, that he was unconscious of the fact that a brief but fierce altercation between the Duke of Gloucester and Lord Grey, in which even the wary Sir Thomas Vaughan was involved, had terminated in the arrest of these and two or three others of his most devoted friends ; nor was it till they halted for dinner that the king missed his brother, who, in virtue of a post of honour that he held about his person, always stood behind his chair during that meal.

' Will it not please your grace to sit down to meat,' said the Duke of Gloucester, on perceiving the king looked inquiringly round him, instead of placing himself at table.

‘Where is the Lord Grey?’ demanded the king. There was an ominous silence among his attendants.

‘Where is my brother Richard, Lord Grey?’ said the king, repeating his question, in an authoritative voice.

‘Where your grace’s faithful counsellors consider it their duty to dispose of all false-hearted traitors, replied the Duke of Gloucester.

‘And who shall dare to class my true and loving brother, Richard Grey, with traitors?’ retorted the young king with a frown.

‘Alack, my liege, I would that painful duty had not fallen to the lot of your faithful guardian and lightly-regarded uncle, Richard of Gloucester,’ said the duke with a sigh; ‘yet so it hath been; for I grieve to tell you that he and your other maternal brother, Thomas Marquis of Dorset, have both been engaged in a base conspiracy, to seize the Tower of London, and make themselves masters of your arms, treasures, and crown jewels; and your royal person being already in possession of the said Richard and his party, it was their treasonable design to govern in your grace’s name, and to commit all sorts of grievous wrong and robbery, till the people could bear it no longer.’

‘These are grave assertions, my lord,’ replied the

king ; ‘ but fortunately the laws of this happy land will not suffer any one to be treated as guilty upon assertion only.’

‘ And does your grace assume that I bear false witness against your traitor brothers ? ’ demanded the Duke of Gloucester.

‘ Uncle, I said not so,’ returned the king ; ‘ but I tell you plainly, I will not hear the epithet of traitor applied to my mother’s sons and mine own brethren.’

‘ Not when their vile practices have so deeply earned it ? ’ said the Duke.

‘ I must first be convinced that such is the fact,’ returned the king gravely. ‘ Would you, uncle Gloucester, wish to be condemned on the bare accusation of an enemy ? ’

‘ Methinks it would become your grace to treat your uncle more reverentially than to bandy words with him thus,’ said the Duke of Buckingham, perceiving that his friend, with all his subtlety, knew not how to answer this home question.

‘ Ay, my good lord,’ rejoined Gloucester, ‘ and all because his grace is willing to remain blind to the crimes of the two false traitors, Dorset and Richard Grey.’

‘ Respecting my brother Dorset’s conduct I can say nothing,’ replied the king, ‘ for of him, notwithstanding our near relationship, I know little : and I am

aware withal that he has been implicated in a foul deed of blood, the knowledge of which must deprive him of the confidence of all good men; I allude, my lord of Gloucester, to the barbarous murder of my unhappy cousin, Edward of Lancaster.' The changing colour and deadly glance of vengeful meaning, with which the duke regarded the king, showed he understood the imprudent inuendo. 'But as for Richard Grey,' continued the youthful monarch, 'I can and will answer for his innocence, and I both entreat and command his immediate release.'

'Your grace, although nominally a king, would be wise to refrain from issuing commands which you have no power to enforce,' said the Duke of Gloucester coldly.

The king turned away and wept; then, with all the eloquence which his affectionate nature taught him, he implored him to restore his uncle Rivers and his brother Richard Grey to him. The duke was inexorable, and the young monarch gave way to a second passionate burst of grief. Without regarding his sorrow, the Duke of Gloucester urged him to dine in a tone that amounted to a command.

'How can I eat when my brother is afflicted and in prison, and fasting perchance?' said the king; then taking the golden plate (on which the Duke of Gloucester had, with an officious show of atten-

tion, selected several of the choicest dainties on the table, and placed before him), he gave it to his page, and said, 'Commend me to my brother, the Lord Grey, my good Edwin, and tell him his brother Edward of England weeps for his absence, and beseeches him to dine from his own plate, and to be of good cheer, and not to omit to remember him in his prayers who will spend this day in fasting and supplications to Almighty God on his behalf.' So saying, the young king rose from table, and retired to a private chamber, where he poured forth the sorrow of his afflicted spirit in fervent prayer to the Divine Disposer of all earthly events, imploring His protection for himself, and His mercy for his unfortunate kinsmen. He was not long permitted to enjoy his lonely communion with God ; for no sooner had the dukes and their attendants dined, than he received an imperative message from his uncle Gloucester, to make ready to mount, for it was necessary to continue his journey to London with all-convenient despatch.

However distasteful this mandate was to the young king, he did not attempt to dispute it, but after once more commanding himself to the care of Him who hath promised to be a father to the fatherless, he meekly rejoined his new guardian, and submitted himself to his direction. Instead of proceeding on the

London road, however, the Duke of Gloucester, by a retrograde route, conducted the king to Northampton, where he detained him till he was assured that the Earl of Rivers, Lord Grey, Sir Thomas Vaughan, and all his approved friends and protectors, were safely lodged in Pontefract Castle, the governor of which was a creature of his own, and capable of any work of villany. The next proceeding of the Duke of Gloucester was to remove from the person of his royal nephew every domestic and officer in whom he appeared to place the slightest confidence, and the king found himself surrounded by spies and incendiaries, and deprived of the society of all those on whose affection and fidelity he had been accustomed to rely. Remonstrance and complaint were alike unavailing ; he perceived that he was, though treated with all outward marks of deference and stately formality, neither more nor less than a prisoner in the hands of those on whom he had too much reason to look with suspicion and aversion.

The Duke of Gloucester did not attempt to conceal from him that the doom of his beloved friends at Pontefract Castle was sealed ; and he tried in vain to move his obdurate heart, from day to day, with incessant tears and entreaties in their behalf. There were moments too, when yielding to the indignation which the conduct of the Duke of Gloucester was calculated

to inspire in a generous bosom, he loaded him with the most passionate reproaches, and bade him render him the obedience which, as his sovereign, was his due ; but this only drew upon him cutting sarcasms, or was listened to with scornful contempt.

Sometimes, as a desperate resource, the unhappy prince applied himself to the Duke of Buckingham, and implored his protection and assistance ; but the wily courtier (though he heard him with every show of attention and interest, and was lavish of soothing words and professions of affection) was, he quickly perceived, no more disposed to befriend him than his iron-hearted uncle Gloucester.

The very looks of the attendants and officers that surrounded him convinced the unhappy Edward that it was a hopeless idea, if he had ever imagined it possible, to make the slightest impression on them ; and feeling assured of this, he spared himself the bitter humiliation of receiving a repulse, by refraining from addressing either of them on the subject nearest his heart.

Thoughts of his distant mother, his beloved brother the young Duke of York, and the princesses his sisters, to whom every hour now brought him nearer (for he had recommenced his journey towards the metropolis), alone prevented him from abandoning himself to utter despair ; but from those dear ones he

heard not, and at times his young spirit was saddened with fears and anxieties on their account. There was no one by whom he could venture to send his dutiful and loving greetings to the queen his mother, and the assurances of his tender remembrance to his brother and sisters, and this grieved him not a little. He doubted not that many affectionate letters and kind messages from the queen had been intercepted by his jealous guardian, therefore he did not impute her silence to any other cause, and eagerly anticipated the time when they should meet again.

The city of London, meantime, was in a complete ferment, on account of the late arrests that had taken place at Stony Stratford. Whispers and dark surmises respecting the conduct of the Duke of Gloucester were in circulation. It was known that the queen, with the young Duke of York and the five princesses her daughters, had left the palace in the dead of night, and taken sanctuary at Westminster in great alarm, as soon as the intelligence of the seizure of the young king's person by the Duke of Gloucester, and the arrest of her brother the Earl of Rivers, her son Lord Grey, and their friends, reached her.

It was rumoured that evil designs were meditated against the king, and that he was neither more nor less than a prisoner in the hands of his wicked and ambitious uncle, and the minds of all sorts and con-

ditions of men were in a state of feverish excitement, as to what might be the event of these things.

The Duke of Gloucester, who was well informed of the dissatisfaction of the people, found that the only way of quieting their suspicions would be by producing his royal nephew before them. Accordingly, on the fourth of May he made his public entry into London, accompanied by a powerful party of his own, and a splendid train of nobles, who were summoned in all haste to attend the king, before whom the duke rode bare-headed, and bowing to the populace right and left, kept perpetually exclaiming in a loud voice, 'Behold your prince and sovereign!'

The beauty and reflective sweetness of the young king's countenance attracted all eyes, and the manly grace and spirit with which he managed his mettled steed, and saluted the ladies (who showered flowers upon him from the crowded windows and balconies), delighted every one, and the streets resounded with acclamations of 'God save King Edward and confound his enemies!'

It was a day of splendid pageantry and universal joy; but it was observed by many, that, notwithstanding the princely courtesy with which the youthful monarch acknowledged and returned the loving greetings of his subjects, there was a sorrowful expression in his eyes, and his very smile was full of sadness.





He appeared to take little pleasure in the gay and animating scene in which, though he bore so distinguished a part, he was too well aware he was only a gilded puppet, played off by the hands of his guileful kinsman, to suit his own ends, and to give a color to his secret plans of treason.

The princely boy felt too that, amidst the thronging multitudes that came to gaze upon him, he was a lonely being, without one friend on whose affection he could rely, or to whom he could breathe a single word in confidence. He turned inquiring glances on the faces of the nobles that surrounded him ; but they were all picked men, and in the Duke of Gloucester's interest. They preserved a cold formal demeanour of outward respect ; but the youthful monarch perceived that from them it would be in vain to expect sympathy or service. He thought of his beloved relatives then in unjust confinement in their gloomy prison of Pontefract Castle, and of his fond mother, and the dear companions of his childhood, who had been compelled to seek an asylum in the sanctuary ; and in spite of his endeavours to restrain them, tears filled his eyes. The pageant was joyless, the music discord, and the stately ceremonials weariness and vexation of spirit to him ; and when the procession reached Ely House, which was appointed for his tem-

porary residence, he gladly sought the privacy of his chamber, that he might relieve his full heart by weeping unobserved.

‘In tears, my royal lord?’ said a soothing voice near him.

The young king, who thought he had been alone, hastily dashed away the sorrowful drops in great confusion, and essayed to force a smile as he raised his eyes slowly to the face of the unknown witness of his emotion.

‘It will not do, King Edward, it will not do!’ said the intruder, who was no other than his host, the Bishop of Ely. ‘Alas, poor child! it is easy for thee to learn the courtly lesson of covering a heart of tears with a face of smiles!’

‘You are a shrewd observer, my lord,’ said the young king, looking anxiously in the bishop’s face.

‘I am a stranger, and your grace would fain inquire whether I may be trusted?’ said the bishop.

‘I believe, and am sure you may,’ replied the king, to whose ear the voice of kindness had long been strange, eagerly pressing his hand.

‘Your Grace’s confidence is not misplaced,’ said the prelate; ‘but O beware, my son, of trusting too readily to soft words and plausible appearances.’

‘Oh that my dear uncle Rivers had learned that lesson, replied the king, ‘then had he not been so ea-



sily beguiled by his subtle enemies. But tell me, my lord bishop, is there no means by which his deliverance, and that of my loving brother, the Lord Grey, may be effected ?'

' I fear, I fear those noble lords are in hands from which no deliverance may be hoped ; Sir Richard Ratcliff, the governor of Pontefract Castle, is a bold bad man, who will not scruple to execute any mandate of blood he may receive from his patron, the Duke——'

The king looked apprehensively round, as if fearful of the bishop's pronouncing the name of his uncle Gloucester, and softly pressing his arm, whispered, ' What tidings of the queen my mother, my sweet brother York, and my beloved sisters. Are they all well ? '

' They are all well, my dear lord.'

' And safe ? '

' As safe as holy church privilege of sanctuary can keep them, but of sorrowful cheer.'

' But will you go to them, my lord bishop ? ' said the king, ' and will you comfort my royal mother, and bear my loving and dutiful greetings to her, and assure her of my health and present safety ; and will you kiss my little brother the Duke of York, for me, and commend me to all my sweet sisters, Elizabeth, Cicely, Anne, Catharine, and baby Bridget, and tell

them I live in hopes of embracing them all once more, and were I free to do so, I would hasten to them, and deliver mine own greetings; for neither you, my lord bishop, however kind, nor any one beside myself, can tell half the love for them with which my heart overflows.'

'I am loth to check the sweet breathings of that natural affection which doth so well become your royal grace,' said the bishop: 'but remember, our conference is too perilous to be prolonged.'

'Well then, my kind lord, we will separate, and abstain from all apparent friendship with each other,' said the king; 'nevertheless, it will be a solace to my sad heart to know that I am under the roof of a good man, and I shall eat of your bread, my lord of Ely, with pleasure; and if ever I am permitted to govern for myself, you shall be the most honoured of my counsellors.'

The bishop regarded the princely speaker with a melancholy smile, and pressing the hand that was so frankly extended to him to his lips, he glided from the apartment through the private door of communication with his own study, by which he entered it.

On rejoining the company at dinner, it was observed that the young king's manner was more cheerful than it had been for many days, and though he avoided conversing with the bishop of Ely, he could not

refrain looking upon him at times with an expression of such affectionate regard, that the suspicions of his wily uncle, by whom he was narrowly watched, were excited, and he instantly resolved to remove the royal youth from under the roof of the worthy prelate. Nor did he delay longer than the following day making his purpose known to the young king, whom he found alone in the episcopal library, deeply engaged in reading a curiously illuminated MS. work, written by Alfred the Great, intitled, 'The various Fortunes of Kings.'

'I am sorry to be under the necessity of interrupting your grace in the pleasant and profitable occupation of pursuing your studies,' said the duke, 'but it is expedient that you should make yourself ready to remove immediately from Ely House to the Tower.'

The cheek of the young king faded to the most deadly paleness at this announcement, and dropping the roll of vellum from his cold and trembling hand, he exclaimed,

'To the Tower, uncle! O surely you do not mean to send me there!'

'And why should you object to take up your temporary residence in that ancient abode of royalty, where so many of your ancestors, the kings of England, have kept court?' asked the duke.

‘Oh, my lord !’ replied the king, fixing his eyes steadily upon the guilty countenance of his conscious uncle, ‘the Tower has been a place so fatal of late to princes, that I cannot contemplate without horror the prospect of going thither.’

‘Do you presume, ungrateful boy, to suspect *me* of entertaining evil designs against you ?’ returned the duke, becoming pale with suppressed anger.

‘God forbid that I should imagine you capable, uncle, of acting so foul a part as to betray the solemn trust that you have undertaken,’ replied the king, bursting into tears, ‘so far as to seek the life of a helpless orphan, of whom you style yourself the protector.’

‘Why then these childish tears, and this perverse reluctance to comply with my arrangements ?’ asked the duke sternly.

The king continued to weep. His uncle regarded him with a contemptuous expression of countenance.

‘Have pity upon me, uncle,’ said the king, ‘and do not send me to that den of blood and midnight murders, the Tower. Let me remain here, and complete my studies under the direction of the good Dr. Morton.’

‘No, no,’ replied the duke, ‘short as has been your sojourn at Ely House, you have been under the direction of that wily priest too long, my lord, and you go hence this very day.’

‘ Well, then, take me to Crosby House, your own palace, uncle, where I shall be too immediately under your own eye for you to entertain suspicions of my holding intercourse with forbidden persons,’ said the king imploringly.

‘ And why should you prefer my poor abode of Crosby House to your own royal residence, the Tower of London?’ demanded the duke with a scrutinizing look.

‘ Because, my lord, I shall there be under the loving care of your noble consort, my kind aunt the Duchess of Gloucester, and enjoy the society of my fair young cousin Prince Edward, your son,’ replied the king, taking his uncle’s hand caressingly, and gazing anxiously in his face, in the vain hope of softening his obdurate heart by alluding to these supposed objects of his affection.

‘ No, no, King Edward,’ returned the duke, ‘ you have been too long under the tutelage of your mother’s traitor brother, the Earl of Rivers, to admit you into mine own domicile. Why, the Duchess Anne, my wife, and you, would encourage each other in contumacious resistance of my will, and between ye both, my dutiful and hopeful boy would learn perversity and disobedience ; besides,’ added he, softening his voice on perceiving the proud flush that overspread the countenance of his royal nephew at

this rude rejoinder, 'my house is meanly furnished, and wholly unprovided for the reception of my sovereign; therefore, my gracious liege, it is a matter of necessity that you should keep court at the Tower till after your coronation, which I propose to take place very speedily.'

'Then may I not be permitted to see the queen my mother, my dear brother, and my gentle sisters?' demanded the king.

'It is no fault of mine, that they have not been, ere now, to pay their duty to your Grace,' said the duke; 'but that evil woman, the queen your mother, hath perversely betaken herself to sanctuary, with Prince Richard and your sisters, with whom she contumaciously refused to part, even for an hour.'

'The manner of your dealing with her brother, mine honoured uncle Rivers, and her son the Lord Grey, hath made her suspicious of you, uncle Gloucester,' replied the king; 'but if you will permit me to visit her in the sanctuary'—

'I shall permit your grace to do no such thing,' interrupted the Duke sharply.

'You will not, at any rate, refuse me the liberty of writing to my royal mother,' said the king.

'Not if you will endeavour to prevail upon her to deliver up the Duke of York, your brother, whom she hath stolen away.'

‘It would ill become me, at my tender years, to presume to dictate to my royal mother in any thing,’ replied the young king, gravely, ‘but especially in a matter that doth so nearly touch herself, and of which she must of necessity be a far more competent judge than myself.’

‘But you have lately complained of loneliness and want of meet associates, my fair nephew,’ said the duke, ‘and who should be so suitable a companion for you, both in your studies and your pastimes, as the young prince your brother. Would you not wish to have him with you, Edward?’

‘Not if I purchased that pleasure by being the cause of tearing him from my mother’s arms, who hath sorrows enow, without being deprived of him.’

‘She cannot long withhold him from the demands of the nation, whose property he is; and therefore, King Edward, you would do wisely to persuade her to yield him up with a good grace,’ said the duke.

‘I have already told you, my lord, that I will not attempt to influence my royal mother’s conduct. Doubtless she hath good reasons, and prudent advisers for what she doth,’ said the king.

‘Then,’ said the duke, ‘I will not permit you to hold any intercourse with her, even by letter.’

‘You have no right, my Lord of Gloucester, to prevent it,’ retorted the king, with a heightened colour.

‘Ay, but I possess the power,’ rejoined the duke, as he left the room.

The bishop of Ely entered a moment after.

‘Oh ! my dear lord,’ cried the king, throwing himself into his arms, ‘I appeal to you for protection and deliverance from the tyrannical usage of my uncle Gloucester, who refuses to allow me to see or even to write to my mother, and is about to remove me, against my own consent, from your hospitable mansion to the Tower.’

‘I grieve to learn it,’ said the bishop, ‘the more so, because my unavailing sympathy is all that I can offer to your Grace.’

‘Oh ! but my Lord,’ returned the king, ‘it was only yesterday that you promised to be my friend,’

‘And so I am, poor child, and so I will be, God willing, but at present I have no power to aid you.’

‘O yes, indeed you have ; you can assist me to escape from my uncle’s custody.’

‘And whither would you go, supposing that were possible ?’ asked the bishop.

‘I would join my mother in the sanctuary at Westminster, or I would flee to the trusty Lord Hastings, my father’s friend, and implore his protection, if you would but permit me to pass these gates,’ said the king eagerly.

‘Alas ! dear child, you know not of what you are talk-

ing. You flee from the custody of your watchful uncle ? You break the meshes of the guileful web in which that cruel spider hath entangled you ? You pass these gates through my connivance, who am myself a prisoner in my own palace, and ever since your abode here have been watched even more jealously than your royal self ? Those of mine own household are spies over me, and believe me, young Plantagenet, it is at positive peril of my life that I hold conference with you now.'

'Leave me then to my unhappy fate,' said the king, weeping. 'I would not requite your kindness, my lord bishop, by exposing you to the malice of one who appears bent on the ruin of every creature who is united to me, either by blood or friendship.'

'Alas ! my royal lord, I fear it is even so,' returned the bishop, tenderly embracing the king, and mixing his tears with his. 'But comfort thee, my son, though environed with dangers, thou art not forsaken, for thy Heavenly Father is still present to protect thee ; and if thy trust be in His mercy, by his everlasting arms shalt thou be supported and upheld under every trial—and here,' continued the good prelate, taking his breviary from the folds of his gown, and putting it into the hand of the king, 'shalt thou find that from which thou shalt draw consolation and support in the deepest moments of affliction.'

‘ May God bless and reward you for your kindness to a friendless orphan, my good lord,’ said the king, reverently placing the splendidly bound and embroidered volume in his bosom. ‘ You will not forget me in your prayers, holy father,’ continued he, raising to the face of the bishop his soft blue eyes, on whose long and shadowy fringes the tear drops still hung.

‘ Nor yet in my daily thoughts, my liege,’ replied the prelate : ‘ rely upon it,’ added he, lowering his voice to a whisper, and pressing his hand significantly on the shoulder of the royal youth, ‘ I shall concert with Dr. Rotherham the Archbishop of York, and with those powerful peers the Lord Hastings and Stanley, for the appointment of a proper council of regency, to act in some measure as a check upon the despotic proceedings of your uncle.’

‘ And you will tell the queen my mother, that you have seen me, and deliver my greetings to her grace,’ said the king eagerly.

‘ Fear not,’ replied the bishop, and left him.

That evening the king was with great pomp conducted, by the Duke of Gloucester, to the royal apartments in the Tower.

Notwithstanding all the encouragement he had received from the worthy prelate, it was with a heavy heart that King Edward left the pleasant episcopal palace for a dreaded abode in that dreary fortress

where so many deeds of darkness had been perpetrated.

A general chill came over him as its gloomy portals expanded to receive him, and, grasping his uncle's arm in the strong revulsion which he felt against crossing that fatal threshold, he exclaimed, 'O ! uncle, do not compel me to enter this ill-omened place.'

' Does this childish terror become a king and a Plantagenet ?' asked the Duke of Gloucester contemptuously. ' Of what, let me ask you, are you afraid ?'

' I am not afraid, my Lord Duke,' replied the young king, colouring indignantly, ' but, if the truth must be spoken, I will acknowledge to you, that I cannot overcome the reluctance I feel to take up my abode in a place that has so recently been polluted with the foul murder of my uncle Clarence.'

' God certainly has threatened to visit the sins of the father upon the children,' retorted the Duke, becoming very pale ; ' and as my unfortunate brother Clarence was done to death by your father King Edward's order, it is not wonderful that you should feel uneasy on that account.'

' Ah ! uncle, uncle !' said the king, ' report wrongs you much if *you* were not the man who moved my father to yield a reluctant consent to that fearful

deed, which I pray may never be visited on the heads of his innocent offspring.'

The brow of the Duke of Gloucester became black as midnight as he muttered, ' And am I to be twitted by my brother Edward's brats with crimes of his committing ? I suppose I shall hear next that it was I who stabbed Henry of Lancaster, as he happened to die in this place !'

' And did you not ?' asked the young king with great simplicity.

' O, I have been misrepresented to your kingship in brave colours, I find,' exclaimed the Duke angrily, ' thanks to the queen your mother, and your late governor and counsellors, my lords Rivers and Grey, but they will soon pay the penalty of their crimes, which your perversity will have the effect of hastening.'

' Oh, say not so, my lord !' exclaimed the king in agony ; ' only spare my uncle Rivers and my brother Grey, and I will go where you will, and become obedient to all your wishes.'

' Compose yourself then, and enter your royal apartments here with the calm dignity that becomes a king, and I shall take the case of the prisoners at Pontefract into consideration,' said the Duke of Gloucester, ' and if it be possible to show any lenity to such vile traitors, I will endeavor to do so, since they are so dear to you.'

These words, however fair, were too ambiguous to inspire the sad heart of his royal nephew with much hope for his unfortunate relatives ; and his dejection of spirit was increased by the profound solitude and gloomy magnificence of the spacious suite of apartments, into which he was introduced with great ceremony by Sir Robert Brackenbury, the lieutenant of the Tower, who respectfully inquired ‘if his Grace required any other conveniences ?’

‘I should be glad of writing materials and books, wherewith to recreate my solitary hours,’ replied the king, looking round him with a melancholy air.

‘The first I am not at liberty to supply your Grace with,’ replied Brackenbury ; ‘ respecting the last I have received no prohibition from the Duke of Gloucester ; and your Grace will find a goodly store of learned books and rare MSS. in a closet through your sleeping apartment, which is well adapted for the purposes of study and meditation, if your Grace delight in such occupations : these things were brought hither for the divitissement of the lonely hours of King Henry the Sixth, and have not been removed since.’

‘And was he the last tenant of these apartments ?’ demanded Edward with a sigh.

‘The last, please your royal Grace, and albeit I should not speak his praises to your royal Grace, see-

ing he was accounted by your royal father as a foe—and, woe worth the day ! dealt with as such in the end ; yet he was the meekest, the kindest, and the most heavenly-minded prince I ever had the honor of serving. One, my gracious Lord, of whom the world was not worthy—but I am too bold in discoursing thus to your Grace of the rival House of Lancaster.'

' Not so,' replied the king ; ' I love to hear of Holy King Henry, and shall feel as if these gloomy apartments had been sanctified by his use ;—but what are yonder dark stains upon the wainscot and the floor of this chamber, Brackenbury ? '

' Do not ask me ! ' said Brackenbury, becoming very pale ; ' every prison-house hath its secrets, which may not be revealed by its keeper.' So saying, he withdrew.

The young king remained for a while immovable, with his eyes fixed on the fatal spot where he felt assured that blood—royal blood—had been spilt ; and when one of the officers of the Tower entered to inquire whether it pleased him to have supper served up, he pointed to the stain, and asked him what it was.

' The blood of Henry of Lancaster ! ' replied the man bluntly. ' Will it like your Grace to sup ? '

' No,' replied the king, shuddering ; ' I cannot eat to-night : ' and the officer withdrew.

With the conviction that he was a prisoner, came also to Edward's mind the suspicion that he was brought hither as a victim, to be immolated at the shrine of his uncle's overweening ambition ; and as he from time to time glanced upon the indelible witness of the murder that had been perpetrated by the remorseless hand of Gloucester in that very chamber, he felt all the horrors of his situation, and with trembling minuteness examined if any lurking murderer were concealed behind the tapestry hangings, or beneath the rich black velvet draperies of the plumed and canopied bed of state, whose heavy hearse-like form and sable hue appeared as if purposely contrived to increase the gloom of the chamber. Then reflecting that however encompassed he might be with dangers, he had done nothing to forfeit the protection of his Heavenly Father, he drew the breviary of the worthy bishop from his bosom, and kneeling down, composed his agitated mind to prayer and devout meditation, and after spending nearly an hour in this employment, he sought his lonely pillow, and tasted that peaceful repose which innocence can enjoy even within the dreary walls of a prison and a slaughterhouse.

The next day, a council was held in the star chamber, in which the Duke of Gloucester's master project

of getting the young Duke of York into his own possession, by either prevailing upon the queen his mother to resign him, or in case of her continuing obstinate in her refusal to give him up, to take him from her perforce, was fiercely debated. The Duke of Gloucester in a long and elaborate speech, set forth the ill effects that would in all probability result to the nation at large, but more especially to the young king and his regency, from the queen's needless precipitation, in taking sanctuary with the royal children, and her perversity in continuing there, and detaining the young prince from the king his brother, who was so desirous of his company. In short, he said it would be the most impolitic thing in the world for the government to be tamely set at defiance by a weak woman, and concluded with recommending the young Duke of York to be taken from the sanctuary by force, if the queen refused to yield him to the demands of the council.

The Bishop of Ely and the Cardinal Archbishop of Canterbury replied at great length to this speech, insisting on the privileges of sanctuaries, which even the worst of tyrants had scrupled to violate ; but the cardinal, who was a weak man, in the sequel consented to go to the queen and demand the young prince of her in the name of the council, and endeavor to

prevail upon her to avert the violence which was threatened by giving up the child peaceably.

Accompanied by several lords and members of the council, the cardinal archbishop entered the sanctuary, where he found the unfortunate queen attired in the deepest weeds of widowhood, and looking the image of woe, seated on the rushes which had been strown on the cold stones for the accommodation of herself and her helpless family, by whom she was surrounded, and who by their affectionate endearments were endeavoring to soothe the passionate sorrow of their afflicted mother.

The lovely countenances of the two elder princesses, Elizabeth and Cicely, were expressive of the most touching melancholy. Grief for the recent death of their royal father, the distress in which they saw their mother involved, and uncertainty as to the fate of their uncle Rivers and their maternal brother, mingled with some apprehensions respecting the safety of the young king, together with undefined fears on their own accounts, had evidently had the effect of casting a temporary shade over their opening bloom of early womanhood. The vivacity and gay spirits of the young Duke of York and his little sisters, though they did not fully comprehend the cause of the distress they witnessed, had been greatly subdued by confinement in this dreary abode, and the grief of

their mother and the elder princesses. They did not weep with them it is true, but they had a mournful and dejected air very unusual in children of their tender age, and they appeared to shrink with alarm and aversion from the slightest proximity to the rude and ruffian crew whose crimes had compelled them to take refuge in the sanctuary.

The deep mourning, the infant innocence and unaffected sorrow, together with the distinguished beauty of the royal children, rendered them a group of such touching interest, that neither the cardinal, nor the noblemen who attended him on his mission, could behold them without emotion.

At the approach of strangers, the younger children clung to their mother in alarm, but the eyes of the elder princesses and the young Duke of York became animated with hope and expectation. The queen's countenance wore a doubtful expression, on the first address of the cardinal, which was couched in very soothing and respectful language ; but when he went on to explain the full meaning of his errand, she interrupted him with great warmth, to enlarge on the sacredness of the privilege of sanctuaries, and to assure him she would rather die than part with her children.

‘ But your Grace is not required to part with any but the Duke of York,’ said the cardinal ; ‘ and sure-

ly you would not wish to withhold him from the arms of the king his brother, who is so desirous of his company that he pines for him incessantly.'

'Then let him come hither, and he shall behold him,' said the queen.

'The king's guardians and council do not consider it proper to introduce his royal Grace into the contagion of such a scene as this,' replied the cardinal, glancing significantly at the rabble rout, who, with ill-mannered curiosity had drawn as near as their limits would allow to the royal group. 'Believe me,' continued he, 'your Grace is much to blame to bring your royal daughters and this tender prince into a place so manifestly improper for them.'

The princesses Elizabeth and Cicely looked much distressed; but the queen replied, by pouring forth a torrent of passionate invectives against the oppression and cruelty of the Duke of Gloucester to herself and all her family, which had compelled her to seek a refuge for herself and her royal children among murderers, robbers, and outlaws of every denomination, in whose neighborhood,' she concluded by saying, 'she knew she could more safely trust them, than in the keeping of their ambitious uncle.'

'Nay, Madam, unless you will talk more reasonably,' said the cardinal, 'I fear we must leave you to the decision of the council, which is, that unless you

think proper to render up the young Duke of York to their requisition, they have resolved to take him from you perforce.'

'Ay, but they dare not violate the privilege of sanctuary to do that,' retorted the queen.

'Your Grace's prudent compliance with the wish of the nation, and the earnest desire of your royal son, shall spare the necessity of such a deed, I trust,' replied the cardinal. 'How say you, my little lord,' said he, addressing the Duke of York; 'would you not like to leave this dismal place, and go with me to the king your brother?'

'Oh, indeed I should!' replied the young prince, 'and I do not like being here at all; for though it is the merry month of May, I can neither see the flowers nor the pleasant green fields, nor hear the song of the pretty birds.'

'But if you will go with me, my Lord,' said the cardinal, 'you shall pass your time in pleasant sports in the palace gardens, the live-long day, with King Edward your brother, and the young lords of his court; and you shall ride forth with him on a princely steed, to hunt the deer with him through his royal parks and pleasaunces, with cheerly sounds of hounds and horns.'

'Oh mother, mother!' cried the boy, clinging to

the queen's arm, 'let me go with these noble lords to the king my gentle brother.'

'And would you leave your tender mother, ungrateful child?' said the queen.

'Dear mother, I am weary of this dismal place, and I would fain go forth to see the pleasant fields and green woods, and take my pastime in the gardens once more.'

'Ah, Richard, Richard, heed not the deceitful words of those who would fain win thee from my sheltering arms to work thy woe, my simple child!' said the queen, drawing him closer to her.

'Fie, madam, what strange perversity is this, to put such cruel constraint on the natural inclination of this fair young prince, whose brotherly affection doth so powerfully impel him to obey the mandate of the king,' said the cardinal. 'Why should you wish to keep those apart whom nature hath so fondly united in the sweet bonds of fraternal love?'

'God knoweth, my Lord,' said the queen, 'that our separation from my royal Edward is my greatest grief; but how shall I, who have had such bitter proofs of the enmity of the Duke of Gloucester to me and mine, venture to trust both these my precious ones in the clutches of that ravenous wolf, who is panting to destroy them?'

'Hush, royal lady, we must not hear you speak

thus unadvisedly of that noble prince the Duke of Gloucester, who in sooth appears most lovingly disposed to his royal nephews,' said the cardinal.

'It may be so,' replied the queen with a sigh, 'but he cannot expect the mother of the Lord Richard Grey to trust another of her sons in his keeping while she can withhold him.'

'But the fair young prince is himself desirous of going; are you not, my lord of York?' said the cardinal.

'Ay, marry, my lord, am I,' replied the young duke sturdily, 'and I will go in faith, if you can persuade the queen my mother to part with me.'

'Her Grace will be wise to consent at once, since her refusal will avail nothing, as matters stand,' said the cardinal; 'and I will be surety that no harm shall befall to this sweet child.'

'Ah York, my pretty York! and must I then part with thee, my precious child?' exclaimed the queen, snatching the young prince to her bosom in a transport of maternal grief and tenderness; and, bursting into a passion of tears, she delivered him to the cardinal, with a solemn charge to be watchful over him, and telling him that if any harm befel him, she should require him at his hands.

'Richard, sweet brother Richard, will you leave us?' exclaimed his sisters, weeping and hanging round him.

‘Fair sisters, I will bring our royal brother, King Edward, with all his valiant knights and nobles, to take you and the queen our mother from this ugly place,’ responded the young prince, breaking from their sorrowful embraces.

‘Nay, tarry, tarry, gentle brother, for we cannot part with you thus,’ cried the Lady Elizabeth, his eldest sister, fondly detaining him.

‘Oh, but, sweet sister mine, I am so longing to be forth of these imprisoning walls, that I cannot stay with you,’ cried the impatient boy.

‘Ah, pretty York ! you know not whither you are hastening, or what dark destiny you may be leaving us to fulfil,’ said the princess, folding him in a parting embrace.

‘Farewell, farewell, my precious child !’ exclaimed his weeping mother ; ‘may good angels be thy speed, and guard thee from every adversity that may threaten thee.’

The younger children lifted up their voices and wept aloud, when they, though happily unconscious of his peril, saw their beloved brother depart with the cardinal and the other lords and gentlemen, who had been deputed by the council to fetch him. As for the queen, ere the doors of the church had fully shut the boy from her fond eyes, her heart misgave her that

she had done wrong in resigning him, and she flung herself upon the pavement with such a passionate burst of grief, that the hearts of the most obdurate of the hardened ruffians in the precincts of sanctuary were melted at the sight of her distress, which her sorrowful daughters vainly strove to soothe by their tender caresses.

Prince Richard, meantime, with all the thoughtless vivacity of childhood, skipping gaily by the cardinal's side, entered the star-chamber, where the Duke of Gloucester, with the other members of the council, were waiting the return of the embassage to the queen, and beginning to marvel at their long delay.

There was a general murmur of admiration in the council room at the sprightly beauty and bold bearing of the princely child, who had only just entered his ninth year; and the Duke of Gloucester, rising from his seat, eagerly advanced to meet him, and taking him up in his arms several times, exclaiming, 'Now welcome, my dear lord, with all my heart!'

'Where is my brother, King Edward?' cried the young duke, struggling to escape from his uncle's arms.

'Have patience a moment, fair nephew, and I will conduct you to your royal brother, who will be dearly glad to see you,' said the Duke of Gloucester with a smile.

‘Oh ! but I want to see him now,’ rejoined the prince impatiently: ‘I thought I should have seen him on his throne there, which you have no right to be seated upon, uncle Gloucester.’

‘That is not a throne, you simple child,’ returned the duke; ‘it is only a chair of state.’

‘And pray, good uncle, what is a throne, if it be not a chair of state ?’ retorted the prince.

‘Go to ! go to, Prince Richard, you are too sharp for me,’ replied the Duke of Gloucester, affecting to join in the general laugh; ‘but we shall have no business done in council to-day, if we attend to your prating, so I suppose I must take you to pay your duty to King Edward your brother.’

The young king was in a melancholy mood, endeavoring to divert his sad thoughts among the precious relics of the learning of past ages with which he was surrounded, when the door was softly unclosed, and his little brother bounded into his arms and overwhelmed him with caresses.

Edward, who though he knew not how to account for his appearance, was delighted to see him, returned his endearments with interest, and clasping him to his bosom, laughed and wept alternately in the fulness of his heart.

‘But how came you hither, my sweet brother York ?’ exclaimed he, when the first transport of his

surprise and pleasure would give him leave to speak.

‘ My uncle Gloucester brought me hither, dearest Edward, and be careful what you say of him,’ said the young prince archly, ‘ for he is at the door listening to our conference, in hopes of hearing some ill of himself I suppose, knowing I love him not, and belike suspecting that he is not very dear unto your Grace.’

‘ Fie, Richard, you will make me chide you if you talk so inconsiderately,’ said the king, tenderly embracing his thoughtless brother.

‘ How likes your Grace the companion I have brought you ?’ said the Duke of Gloucester, fully unclosing the door which stood ajar, and advancing.

‘ It would have been a difficult matter to provide me with one more dear, my lord,’ replied the king, raising his eyes to his uncle’s face with one of those sunny smiles which had long been strangers to his noble features.

‘ Then see you use him lovingly,’ rejoined the duke, and left the royal brothers to themselves.

The young king then requested his brother to give a particular account of all that had befallen himself, the queen their mother, and the princesses, since the death of the late king their father.

‘ I shall never forget what a sorrowful time it was,’ said the little prince, ‘ when the shrieks of my mother

and sisters, and the lamentations of their women, first told me the sad tidings of my father's death.'

' Alas ! ' observed the young king, ' how differently was that sorrowful event revealed to me by smiling relatives and flattering courtiers, who crowded round me in eager rivalry which should be the first to tell me I was a king. But I interrupt you in your sad relation, my sweet brother.'

' The next thing I remember, dear Edward,' continued the prince, ' was being roused from my peaceful slumbers at midnight by a confused sound of sorrowful voices, and busy hurrying to and fro in the palace ; and while I was yet casting about in my mind what this should mean, much fearing that some new calamity had befallen us, my weeping nurse came to my bedside, and bade me rise in haste to accompany the queen my mother and my sisters into sanctuary. Sleepy and frightened as I was, dear Edward, I grew wayward, and told the nurse I would not leave my bed to go abroad into the dark ugly night, for it blew a heavy gale, the rain and hail pattered against the windows, and I heard the sullen roaring of the river, so I crept under the bed-clothes, and bade nurse begone ; but the next moment my dear mother entered, with pale cheeks and streaming eyes, and, snatching me up in her arms, cried in a piercing voice of distress,

‘Richard! my darling, my precious boy! you must away with me, for your cruel uncle Gloucester hath arrested, and I fear me slain your valiant uncle Rivers, and your brother Richard Grey, and seized the person of the young king your brother at Northampton; and next he will seek our lives, my sweet child, therefore must we to the sanctuary at Westminster with what speed we may! ’

‘She then wrapped me hastily in her mantle, and bore me in her own arms, in all my night-clothes as I was, across the palace yard, attended by my brother Dorset, and followed by my weeping sisters, Elizabeth, Cicely, and Anne, and the nurses carrying the sleeping Catherine and Bridget; and when we came to a postern door in the Abbey, my brother Dorset knocked there with the hilt of his sword, and prayed the porter for admittance into the sanctuary for a sorrowful widow and her orphan babes, who were enforced to flee from a wicked prince, who sought to kill them for the sake of their inheritance. So, after consulting with the good dean, we were permitted to enter; and some of our faithful servants brought beds and other conveniences from the palace for our use, and we have abode in the sanctuary ever since. Now, Edward, a sanctuary is a very dismal place——’

‘Know you not, my fair brother, that I was born in

that same sanctuary during the troublous wars of the roses,' said the king.

'Yes, Edward, my mother said that you were born at a heavy time for our parents; and often she has told us of her affliction during the perilous rebellion of Warwick the king maker, who took our royal father prisoner, which enforced her to flee from this Tower of London (where she then kept court), by water to Westminster, where she took sanctuary, and was delivered of you in the Jerusalem chamber. We had no such comfortable lodgings, I trow, during our sad sojourn in the Abbey.'

'But how came you forth of the sanctuary, my sweet brother?' asked the king.

'Forsooth, because the lords of the council sent the Cardinal Archbishop to fetch me forth.'

'Did they violate the privilege of sanctuary, and take you thence perforce?' asked the king.

'No; for the queen my mother yielded to my entreaties, and let me go.'

'Yielded to your entreaties!' echoed the king, 'and did you wish to leave her, Richard?'

The young prince looked down, blushed, and after a moment's reflection said: 'I thought it was my duty to obey your royal mandate, Edward, and therefore I came unto you when I heard it was your desire to see me, and have me with you.'

‘ Ah Richard ! you have been deceived,’ replied the king sorrowfully. ‘ I sent not for you ; and, however dearly I desired your company, I knew too well how deeply being deprived of you would add to our royal mother’s afflictions to require it, and moreover, Richard, I will not conceal from you my sad suspicion that I stand in peril of my life from the dark devices of one who aspires not only to govern in my name, but actually to wear my crown ; but while you were safe with the queen in the sanctuary, which bold as he is he dared not violate, his taking my life would have availed him little, since you would have succeeded to my lawful title, and the people, being roused to indignation by so foul a deed as shedding the blood of an orphan nephew and his king, he knew would espouse your cause. Thus you see, dear Richard, *your* safety was *my* security ; but now he has succeeded in getting you into his power also, it will be easy for him to cut us both off at one blow.’

‘ But, my royal brother, as you are a king, why do not you attaint that false traitor, and order his head to be struck off on Tower Hill hard by, and then cause it to be set up on a spear over Ludgate, or on the Bridge ? ’ exclaimed Prince Richard fiercely.

‘ Gramercy, little York ! you are for summary proceedings, I find. Go to, I love not to see you so bloodily disposed against your enemies,’ said the king.

‘I have heard my royal father say that the *lex talionis* was the fashion of our house. So, Edward, I can quote latin for what I say,’ replied the young duke.

‘The law of retaliation is not the divine law of God, by which we are commanded to love our enemies,’ said the king.

‘I never could love any one that did me wrong,’ observed Prince Richard.

‘Then your heart is not with God, my brother, or you would endeavor to obey his precepts,’ said the king. ‘But, with regard to that which you were so earnest with me to do, even if I had the wish to punish my ambitious uncle for his evil deeds, I have not the power.’

‘Nay, Edward, you are mocking me now! why do not you call upon your trusty peers, and valiant knights, to perform your royal hests?’ said Prince Richard.

‘I fear *they* would *mock me* if I did,’ returned the youthful monarch with a sigh; ‘for, Richard, I am friendless and alone.’

‘Friendless and alone!’ echoed the young prince in surprise: ‘where is your royal court?’

‘My uncle says it is here,’ returned the king.

‘Here!’ rejoined the Duke of York, looking round

in some alarm; 'why this looks more like a prison than a royal king's abode!'

'May it not be both, my simple brother?' asked the king with a melancholy smile.

'But where are your brave guards, and faithful followers, my liege?' asked the prince.

'Here,' returned the young king.

'I do not see any body,' rejoined the prince, looking about in some perplexity.

'Fido, come forth!' said the king; and a little spaniel, which had followed him to the Tower, and been the sole companion of his solitary hours since his residence in that fortress, crept from beneath his chair, and putting his paws on his royal master's knee, looked wistfully in his face.

'There, Richard,' continued the royal youth, turning his moist eyes upon his little brother, 'you now behold my kingly state and royal retinue! Were not you better off in the sanctuary at Westminster, with your mother and sisters, dear boy?'

The young prince burst into a passion of tears.

'I wish it were possible for you to return thither,' said the king thoughtfully; 'but the imprudence of our dear mother, in yielding you up, is I fear irremediable.'

Ah, Edward! it was all along of my impatient de-

sire to be forth of the gloomy sanctuary,' sobbed the prince ;—

‘ Which hath, I fear, been the means of bringing you into harsher restraints, and a more perilous prison house ; where, I doubt, your innocent life will be in hourly jeopardy, poor child ! ’ said the king, pressing him to his bosom, and tenderly kissing away his tears.

‘ And do not any of your loyal lieges come hither to offer homage to your Grace ? ’ asked Prince Richard, after his first burst of sorrow had subsided.

‘ None, Richard, none ! ’ replied the king. ‘ I have no *loyal* lieges, I suppose.’

‘ But may you not ride forth to hunt the stag in your royal parks and pleasaunces ? ’ demanded the prince.

The king shook his head. ‘ Can you not see, Richard, that I am to all intents and purposes a prisoner, and that you are brought hither to share my captivity—perchance my untimely death ? ’

‘ Oh, that false cardinal ! to beguile me from my loving mother with such arrant deceit ! ’ cried the young duke. ‘ Doth he not deserve to die the death of a traitor, without benefit of clergy, brother Edward ? ’

‘ Belike, poor man, he was himself deceived by the fair speech but foul devices of my guileful uncle Gloucester,’ said the king ; ‘ and therefore, my brother, let

us think charitably of him, and rather pity him for want of judgment, than condemn him as one capable of such base treachery.'

The unbroken solitude in which the royal brothers now passed their days in the Tower, was far more wearisome to Prince Richard than to the young king, whose studious and reflective turn of mind, which was united with fervent and unaffected piety, enabled him to bear with patience and equanimity every trial that was laid upon him, and to recognise the hand of his Almighty Father in the adversity that had befallen him. Restraint, confinement, deprivation of regal state, gay sports, and pleasant exercises, he endured without repining, and endeavored to employ the leisure they afforded him in improving his own mind and cultivating that of his younger brother, who possessed great precocity of intellect, a sharp piercing wit, united with singular powers of observation and great facility in acquiring languages, and every thing in which he was instructed; but with all this he was volatile, restless, and impatient of restraint. His gay ardent spirits, when once depressed by confinement and gloomy anticipations, lost their vivacious tone, and he became dejected, listless, and sorrowful, and resisted all his anxious brother's attempts to cheer, or rouse him from the morbid melancholy into which he was plunged.

At length the good bishop of Ely found means of conveying to the young king the pleasing intelligence that he, with the Cardinal Archbishop of Canterbury, the lords Hastings and Stanley, and other distinguished persons, were organizing a party for the purpose of opposing the Duke of Gloucester's ambitious designs upon the crown, (which he no longer attempted to conceal), to concert measures for rescuing the captive princes from his power, and to assert the rights of the young king. The plans of these prelates and nobles were but in embryo, nevertheless, the assurance that he was not wholly forsaken and forgotten, was sufficient to give comfort to the object of their solicitude ; and when, in the hope of reviving the drooping spirits of the beloved partner of his captivity, he communicated to him the friendly dispositions of these powerful partisans, the lively imagination of the youthful prince picturing to him his deliverance as certain, transported him at once from the depths of despair to the extremes of joy, and he became of a sudden so full of joy and animation, that his brother was compelled to check his playful vivacity, lest his altered demeanor should excite the suspicions of their attendants.

‘ The prospect, however remote, of being restored to freedom, friends, and royal dignity, is indeed a cordial to my sad heart, dearest Richard,’ said the king ; ‘ but

when I consider the uncertainty of all human purposes, and the chances and changes to which the best appointed schemes of earthly wisdom are subject, I dare not reckon on the result of this, which may too probably end in disappointment, if, indeed, it have not the effect of precipitating our fate.'

' Dear Edward, do not damp our present hopes by moralizing thus,' said Prince Richard impatiently ; ' I am sure the trusty Lord Hastings has it in his power to do much ; he is a very brave and worthy nobleman, bold in field and wise in council, and he will be certain to effect our deliverance.'

' We had not been where we now are, Richard, had not that very Hastings on whom you are placing such reliance, in order to gratify his animosity against my uncle Rivers and the rest of our maternal kindred, countenanced the Duke of Gloucester's lawless proceedings at Northampton, against those noble lords who are now languishing in hopeless captivity in Pontefract Castle, if, indeed, they may yet be reckoned among the living.' And here the thoughts of those beloved and unfortunate friends brought tears to the eyes, and anguish to the affectionate bosom of their royal kinsman.

On the following day the captive princes, who were still permitted to attend mass in the chapel, had just concluded their devotions, when an unwonted stir in

that usually quiet part of the fortress excited their curiosity. The harsh sound of many voices engaged in fierce and stormy altercation, was succeeded by the clash of arms, and the rush of advancing and receding feet. The confused uproar of what appeared a short sharp scuffle in the council room died away, and the profound silence that followed was, after the lapse of a few moments, broken by the jangling discord of raising the great bell, which presently began to toll, in dull heavy repeated strokes, a dismal death-knell. Then the portentous roll of muffled drum and the measured tramp of armed men was heard in the court below.

The cheeks of the captive princes became pale with fearful interest at these ominous sounds. They approached the chapel windows, and saw that the yard was filled with halbert and habergeon men, in the centre of whom a hollow square was formed that enclosed a large block of wood, the fragment of the trunk of a tree that had been hewn up into billets for the Tower fires. This one of the officers of the Tower hastily covered with a black velvet pall.

‘Oh, brother! what may these dismal preparations portend?’ cried the young Duke of York, clinging fearfully to the arm of the king, as if for protection.

‘A bloody execution, I fear,’ responded the youthful monarch, becoming cold and colourless as the mar-

ble monument against which he supported his agitated frame.

‘Oh, Edward, come away, and let us hide ourselves,’ cried the trembling prince.

‘Hush !’ said the king, ‘I recognise Catesby and Lovel, my uncle Gloucester’s wicked coadjutors in nameless deeds of guilt, and there is Sir Robert Brackenbury,—

‘Ah !’ cried Prince Richard, with a suppressed shriek, ‘and there is the fell headsman, with the deadly axe in his hand,—

‘With the edge towards the prisoner who is now about to be brought forth,’ murmured the young king, in a voice half choked with the agonizing excitement of that dread moment of suspense which intervened ere the unknown victim appeared upon the scene of death.

‘Oh ! Richard, Richard ! it is the Lord Hastings, that powerful friend upon whose assistance we had built such vain hopes of deliverance ! Alas ! and hath his generous regard for us brought him to this ?’ he exclaimed, as a gentleman of martial bearing and noble presence advanced, bound and guarded, towards the fatal block. The flush of fierce anger was upon his sunburned cheek, and his haughty brow was compressed and troubled. He looked round among the spectators with stern and reproachful meaning, as if to

upbraid them for their quiescence in tamely witnessing the illegal execution of an unjust sentence ; but all appeared stunned and paralysed at the suddenness of the thing, yet, notwithstanding his outward bold demeanor, no one was more so than himself. ‘ He was a warrior and a reveller,’ invincible in his courage and incorruptible in his loyalty ; yet he was a man of vindictive passions, cruel, remorseless, and licentious in his private conduct, and, with committed murder upon his conscience and meditated murder in his heart, while exulting in the assurance that the executions of the unfortunate prisoners at Pontefract, whom he had pursued with unrelenting hatred, were to take place that very day, found himself in the same hour called upon to render up his own awful account to Him from whom no secrets are hidden ! In the desperation of that dreadful moment he demanded the assistance of a priest, but that consolation was denied him by the pitiless instruments of the Duke of Gloucester’s vengeance, who brutally hurried the execution with the unfeeling jest, ‘ that the Duke, who had sworn not to dine before sentence was executed, was hungry, and in haste to break his fast.’

Faint and sickening with horror at the scene before him, the young king turned with streaming eyes from the contemplation of the approaching work of death,

to support his terrified brother, who had swooned with mortal terror.

The dull heavy crash that announced the descent of the axe on the neck of the devoted nobleman, sent a cold shudder through the frame of the king, which for a moment checked the pulsation of his heart, and suspended his respiration. Then the customary proclamation, in the stern sonorous voice of the executioner, 'This is the head of a traitor!' followed by a low sullen murmur among the people, and the deafening shout of 'God save the King, and Duke Richard the Protector,' from the soldiers and assistants in the tragedy, declared too surely that the deed of blood was perpetrated. A minute after, the thundering discharge of the Tower guns shook the chapel to its foundation, and startled the fainting prince from temporary insensibility into a sudden painful consciousness of waking horror, that appeared to his confused imagination like the fantasma of a frightful dream. 'Where are we? and what has befallen us, Edward?' cried he, starting from his brother's trembling arms, and gazing fearfully round him.

'Be calm, my sweet brother,' said the young king, drawing him tenderly to his bosom; 'we are, as before, under the protection of our Heavenly Father, though the arm of flesh in which we confided for deliverance has just been laid low in our very sight,

which must teach us the vanity of placing our reliance on any earthly stay.' Here a passionate burst of tears relieved his full heart, and the royal brothers, enfolding each other in a close embrace, continued to weep till the entrance of Sir Robert Brackenbury, pale and agitated, who, on learning that the young princes had been left alone in the chapel, by the attendants, officers, and officiating priests and servitors all hurrying to witness the execution of the unfortunate Lord Hastings, had hastened thither in great alarm lest they should have availed themselves of that opportunity for attempting their escape.

He uttered an ejaculation of satisfaction on finding they were safe, and requested permission to attend them to their apartment.

'Oh! Sir Robert!' exclaimed the king, 'tell me what was the occasion of the dreadful sight I have just witnessed ?'

'What sight my royal liege ?' asked Brackenbury.

'The murder of my Lord of Hastings, at which I saw you so basely assisting,' replied the king, sternly regarding him.

'I grieve that such should have been my unhappy lot,' replied the lieutenant of the Tower, lowering his eyes in confusion beneath the reproving glance of his youthful captive; 'but,' continued he, 'it is the painful duty of my office to be at times compelled to wit-

ness and appear consenting unto deeds from which one's inmost soul revolts.'

' You may be called upon, ere long, to assist at the murder of your lawful sovereign, whose gaoler you have been so long,' observed the king.

' Now God in his mercy forbid ! ' said Brackenbury, greatly agitated.

' We read in holy writ, Sir Robert, that Hazael, when the prophet revealed to him the crimes that he would commit, indignantly replied, ' Is then thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing ? ' And yet, Sir Robert, though forewarned of the evil, he went home, and took the very step that led to the fulfilment of the man of God's prediction,' returned the king. ' And you, in like manner, when the temptation tries you, and the Duke of Gloucester asks your assistance in removing the obstacles that hinder his passage to the throne, will deem it your duty to be at least quiescent.'

' Has your Grace ever experienced any lack of dutiful respect in your faithful servant, that you should wrong him with such unkind suspicions ? ' asked Sir Robert Brackenbury, much agitated.

' I can only judge of your probable conduct to myself under such circumstances, from your having compromised your conscience by becoming an accomplice in the murder of my last friend, the loyal Hastings,' said the king, coldly.

‘ Your Grace is not aware that Hastings,’ observed Brackenbury, ‘ was a principal agent in the downfall of your noble kinsmen, my lords Rivers and Grey, and that he expressed the most indecent exultation this very morning, just before he attended that council which proved so fatal to him, on learning that the execution of those unfortunate nobles was to take place to-day at noontide—at which time a fearful visitation of retributive justice hath fallen upon his own head ! ’

‘ Alas ! my kind, my noble uncle ! and you, my loving brother ! ’ exclaimed the king, clasping his hands in the bitter anguish of his heart at this sad news ; ‘ and shall I behold ye no more ! and have ye been doomed to an ignominious death for your faithful love to me ! Unhappy that I am ! to feel the sad consciousness that all my friends are marked to be cut off by one who misnames himself my Protector ! ’

This was the drop of bitterness that made the already brimming cup of misery of which the youthful king had been compelled to drink overflow. After he was assured of the murder of these beloved relatives, the cherishing friends of his childhood, his last hope appeared to have deserted him, and he yielded to the deepest despondency. The intelligence of the arrest of the Cardinal Archbishop of Canterbury, of Lord Stanley, and worse than all, that of the good

Bishop of Ely, all of whom had been taken into custody at the same time with lord Hastings, had the natural effect of increasing his melancholy ; with which was mingled anxious apprehensions for the safety of his mother and sisters, of whom he heard no other tidings than that they continued in the sanctuary at Westminster, not daring to stir thence for fear of falling into the power of the Duke of Gloucester, by whose watchful emissaries they were surrounded on every side.

‘ Why do the bells ring so merrily ? ’ asked Prince Richard one morning of the sullen attendant who served them at their solitary meals.

‘ It is on account of the coronation of the king,’ replied the man bluntly.

King Edward started, and the prince his brother angrily rejoined,

‘ The coronation of the king ! false knave ! what mean you by mocking me with thy ill-mannered gibes, when you see the king, wo the day, in durance ? ’

‘ Ay, him whom *you* call the king, my little lord,’ replied the man ; ‘ but the people, who are not to be ruled over by babes and sucklings, have chosen that wise, mighty, and renowned prince, Richard of Gloucester, to be their sovereign, and he is this day crowned and anointed king in Westminster Abbey.’

‘ The false villain ! ’ exclaimed the young prince .

‘now, as I am a king’s son and a Plantagenet, I would I had been this day in the sanctuary, for then I might have entered the choir, where he durst not have touched me, and defied him as a traitor and usurper to his teeth.’

‘Belike your fiery little grace would also feel disposed to take up the champion’s glove, when he gives the challenge in Westminster Hall?’ said the man.

‘I would I were a man, and free to do him battle for my brother King Edward’s right,’ said the prince fiercely clenching his hand. ‘Why, Edward, my sweet brother, how calmly you hear the news of this audacious treason, which robs you of your kingdom.’

‘My kingdom is not of this world, I perceive,’ replied the king meekly, raising his eyes to heaven; ‘nor will my portion,’ he softly added, ‘be long with those who draw the breath of life. Those bells, that ring such jocund peals to announce the successful usurpation of my uncle, are my knell, and your’s, dear Richard, also, for we are now as one, and the solemn warning they sound to us both is this, ‘Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live.’

‘Oh! brother, brother!’ sobbed the young prince, ‘why should we be slain?—we have done no wrong.’

‘Ought not that consideration to be our greatest happiness?’ replied the king. ‘Would not our guilty uncle, think you, at this moment give the crown

which he has purchased with a thousand crimes, to be able to say what you have said ?'

' Oh ! but it is so hard to die—and we are so young ! ' said the weeping prince.

' Would it not have been better for my uncle Gloucester, if he had been cut off like his brother Rutland, while innocent like him ? ' asked Edward.

' Oh ! yes, but we should never become as wicked as our uncle Gloucester.'

' Ah ! Richard, how can you speak so confidently ? ' replied the king. "'The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Who can know it ? ' We have never experienced the temptations to which that unhappy man has yielded, and doubtless it is in mercy to us both that we are removed from the allurements of pleasure, the seductions of ambition, and the intoxications of power, for which perishing delusions we might have imperilled our immortal souls, and forfeited that incorruptible inheritance which fa-deth not away, for the enjoyment of which I humbly hope our Heavenly Father is preparing us, through the chastening of many sorrows. Let us, my brother, acknowledge his goodness in all his dispensations, and count the loss of all earthly things as gain, for the hope that is set before us ; for the light afflictions of this present time are not to be compared with the e-ternal weight of glory which shall be revealed.'

And now the royal brothers appeared forgotten by the whole world ; ignorant of every thing that passed beyond the narrow confines of their lonely chamber, they passed their time in prayer and devotional exercises there, for they were no longer permitted to attend divine service in the chapel, lest their appearance should continue to remind people that they were in existence, which their usurping uncle was desirous of having wholly forgotten ; and well he calculated on the fickleness of popular feeling, which, however powerfully excited for a time, is so evanescent in its nature, that it rarely outlives the nine days' wonder.

The mild and heavenly demeanor of the captive king had created a strong interest for him in the heart of Sir Robert Brackenbury, who was accustomed to see him every day, and to offer him many little courtesies, which were very acceptable to those deserted children of royalty at a time when they felt themselves abandoned by every former friend. But his visits were suddenly discontinued, and when the captive princes inquired of their attendant why they did not see Sir Robert Brackenbury as usual, he replied,

‘ He is no longer lieutenant of the Tower.’

‘ And who has succeeded to his office ? ’ demanded the king.

‘ One master James Tirrel has the keys now, ‘ re-

plied the man, with a look of peculiar meaning: 'I don't think he is called the lieutenant of the Tower, though we are to obey his orders.'

A fearful suspicion of the cause for which Sir Robert Brackenbury had been removed, and a person of no reckoning inducted into an office of such responsibility as the control of the Tower, involving as it did the charge of state prisoners of their importance, flashed at once on the minds of both the princes; and exchanging a look of mournful intelligence, as soon as the attendant had withdrawn they enfolded each other in a long and sad embrace; then kneeling down together, they solemnly prepared themselves for the awful change which they felt awaited them.

The king had long been convinced of the vanity and insufficiency of all earthly things; he had experienced many a bitter lesson of the fickleness and treachery of a world which had at first appeared in such flattering colors, and as if only made for him, but which had abandoned him on the first reverse of changing fortune. His young heart was now weaned from its delusions, and had learned to fix its hopes where only true joys are to be found. Yet the immediate prospect of death, either by open violence or midnight murder, was terrible to him, and the thought that his little brother would undoubtedly be involved in the same dismal fate, increased the agony with

which shuddering nature contemplated the probability of their impending doom. The anguish too with which the fond heart of his afflicted mother would be pierced, when the dreadful intelligence should reach her, recurred to his mind, and the idea of her unprotected desolate state, and that of his helpless sisters, filled his eyes with tears, and increased in a tenfold degree the bitterness of death. Yet in that hour of sore distress, though sorrowful, he was not forsaken ; a calm, a heavenly calm, the result of deep and fervent prayer, succeeded in his soul to the tumultuous tempest of earthly griefs and earthly cares with which it had been agitated. The dove-like wings of hope and faith were then expanded, and his heavenward spirit appeared eager to flee away and be at rest.

His devotions, and those of his little brother, were prolonged that night to a very late hour, and, after recommending themselves, their widowed mother, their orphan sisters, and all friends who might still remember them or who suffered for their sakes, to the protection of that merciful God whose all-seeing eye watches over the meanest of his creatures, likewise entreating his forgiveness for all who had injured them, not excepting their cruel uncle, in behalf of whom King Edward, after some little difficulty, at length prevailed upon his less placable brother to join him in a solemn petition for forgiveness at the throne

of grace, they both sought that bed which was so soon to be their grave.

‘The peace of God, which passeth all understanding,’ was in the hearts of the youthful twain. Fatigued with the unusual length and fervency of their devotions, in spite of their consciousness that the snares of death encompassed them about, they soon, entwined in each other’s arms, sunk into a sleep so calm and profound, that the entrance of the murderous ruffians who came commissioned to cut short the thread of their pure and harmless lives disturbed them not. And so touching, so beautiful was the picture of brotherly love and holy innocence which the gentle pair presented in their serene repose, their heads resting on the same pillow, on which laid the breviary book they had been so lately perusing, that, as one of the murderers afterwards confessed, ‘it shook his guilty purpose,’ and had it not been for the taunts and threats of his more obdurate companion, he could not have perpetrated the crime of crushing two such sweet and hopeful blossoms in the bud. Yet both the ministers of death agreed in performing their barbarous commission with a comparative exercise of mercy, for they were careful not to alarm their gentle victims by rudely startling them from that calm repose, which the murderous work of one irrecoverable moment converted into the sleep of death, and dis-

missed the pure spirits of these royal brothers to the enjoyment of that heavenly kingdom, for which the perilous, and to them fatal distinctions of earthly greatness, had been cheaply exchanged.



THE CHASE OF WAREHAM.

ON the death of Edgar the Second, surnamed the Peaceable, England was distracted by the contentions of two adverse factions respecting the choice of a successor to the crown.

At the head of the most powerful party, distinguished by the name of the Dunstanites, was the famous Archbishop Dunstan,* who supported the title of Edward the Atheling, or prince royal, the eldest son of the deceased monarch by his first wife. The other faction, called the Anti-Dunstanites, were the partizans of the queen dowager, the beautiful but wicked Elfrida, who was ambitious of placing her young son Ethelred on the throne, and governing in his name during a long minority. But while the whole nation was divided and involved in civil discord on this point, and the most deadly hatred agitated the minds of those who espoused the rival claims of the sons of Edgar, it is an interesting fact that the youth-

* Some account of this celebrated statesman and ecclesiastic will be found in the *Historical Summary*.

ful princes, though only brothers by the half blood were united in the tenderest bonds of love.

Edward, who had just completed his fourteenth year, had been named by his father as his successor. The right of primogeniture was his also, and in the Witenagemot, or great national council, the eloquence and influence of the two archbishops, Dunstan and Oswald, obtained a formal recognition of those rights, and Prince Edward was, in conformity to the will of his deceased father, placed on the throne of the Anglo Saxons.

At the tender age of seven years the baleful passion of ambition had no place in the then guileless heart of the younger prince. Unconscious of the charms of royalty, of which he had as yet only experienced the restraints, the loss of a kingdom was not to him matter of either disappointment or regret. The only sorrow of which the Witenagemot was productive to him was his separation from that beloved elder brother, in whose affectionate bosom he had, from his earliest remembrance, been wont to repose his childish joys and griefs, and who had been his companion, his guide, and his own sweet familiar friend. Never were the soothing kindness and fond endearments he had been accustomed to receive from the princely Edward so much required by the Ethelred as at this period, when all the evil passions of his

haughty mother's nature had been roused and called into baleful activity during her late attempts to supplant her royal step-son ; and, having been foiled in her endeavours to usurp the royal authority in Ethelred's name, she vented her mortification and baffled rage on the unfortunate object of her maternal ambition and defeated machinations.

Weak in body and feeble in mind, Ethelred had evidently been designed by nature for a private station, and these constitutional defects frequently subjected him to the bitterest reproaches and most injurious treatment from the imperious Elfrida, whose unrestrained violence of temper rendered her at all times an object of terror to him, although occasionally experiencing the most pernicious indulgence from her when caprice inclined her to fondness.

Child as he was, Ethelred was only too painfully aware of the evil traits of his mother's character, and, since he had been deprived by death of his natural protector, and afterwards separated from his affectionate brother, he seemed to tremble at the sound of her step, and sought at all times to avoid her presence, while he beheld with jealous displeasure the caresses she bestowed on her little cankered dwarf Wulstan, whose droll tricks and impish mischief occasionally possessed the power of diverting the black gloom that oppressed her, after she had been compelled to resign

the gaiety and splendor of the court for a solitary residence in Corfe Castle, one of the royal demesnes in Dorsetshire, which had been the favorite hunting palace of her late husband King Edgar, who had been accoustomed to spend much of his time there ; and thither Elfrida had been allowed by her generous step-son to retire, with her son Prince Ethelred and a train suitable to the dignity of his father's widow. Instead of being moved by the kindness and forbearance of the young king, Elfrida continued in secret her treasonable practices against him. She had already sacrificed her first husband Ethelbald to her ambition, and she only waited for a suitable opportunity of attempting the life of Edward. The Archbishop Dunstan was, however, fully aware of her cruel and perfidious disposition, and he strictly guarded his royal pupil from all her machinations and conspiracies against his person, and warned him perpetually against the imprudence of either admitting her to visit the court, or trusting himself in the vicinity of her abode. So implicitly had the cautions of Dunstan been attended to by those about the young king, that for a period of three years he had been prevented from holding the slightest intercourse with Elfrida and her son.

But the affectionate heart of Edward yearned towards his younger brother, whom he earnestly desired

to embrace once more. The cares of royalty, the sceptre of a divided realm, and the severe restraints and self-sacrifices imposed upon him by his austere but faithful guardian Dunstan, were grievous to the youthful monarch, who, in addition to these, was compelled to submit to the stern discipline of a monastic education ; and the mode in which learning was communicated in those days was equally fatiguing to the preceptor and painful to the pupil. Elementary books were not then written to facilitate the progress of education. There were not above three copies of a meagre dictionary in existence in England, and lessons were learned from dictation, till by frequent repetition the student committed them to memory, or, according to the ancient phrase, "got them by heart."

These indispositions were distasteful to the young king, and were often sadly contrasted by him with the pleasures and joyous freedom of his early years, before his accession to the regal dignity had burdened him with the heavy fetters of state and deprived him of the amusements of his age, and above all of the company of his brother Ethelred, his tenderly-beloved living plaything.

The royal manor and Castle of Corfe had been, as I said before, the favorite residence of the deceased king his father, during whose reign it had been a constant scene of gaiety and festivity. The happy days

of Edward's childhood had been spent there, and when he compared the gloomy routine and fatiguing employments of his present mode of life with the sweet remembrances of that pleasant time, he felt disposed to regard the demesne of the queen dowager as a sort of Eden, contrasted with which the rest of his kingdom was but an extensive wilderness.

This desire of revisiting the scenes of his infancy, "his home," as he emphatically styled Corfe Castle, became more pressing in proportion as it was resisted by his inexorable guardian and the rest of the wise counsellors by whose decision he, while a minor, was compelled to abide, and he secretly resolved to embrace the first opportunity that might occur for the gratification of his wish.

Meantime, unremitting application to the laborious studies and public duties which Dunstan enjoined, impatience of the restraints imposed upon him, and above all, his incessant pining for the beloved scenes, and companion of his childhood, produced a visible change in his health. His fading cheek, heavy eye, and languid appearance, at length attracted the attention of Dunstan, who, in common with most ecclesiastics of that period, possessed a considerable knowledge of physic, and was desirous of administering to his royal pupil a medicine which he considered might be efficacious to him.

‘It is of no avail,’ said Edward, rejecting as he spoke the proffered cup, ‘it is not a nauseous compound of drugs that will restore me to health. It is the diversions, the relaxations, and the companionships of my age that I require.’

‘Know you not, O, king! that as the lord of a mighty nation you are called upon to put away childish things, and to employ your precious time in fitting yourself for the performance of the important duties which pertain to your exalted station?’ said the archbishop.

‘Ah! station full of sorrow!’ exclaimed the young king, ‘how gladly would I exchange its gilded fetters for the healthful toils and envied freedom of a shepherd boy!’

‘In the same sinful spirit of discontent and rebellion against the dispensations of the Most High, thou wouldest have coveted regal dignity, hadst thou been doomed to bear the hardships and privations of a herdsman’s lot,’ replied the archbishop,

‘I could endure them all patiently, yea joyfully, were I permitted to breathe the fresh free air of dale and down in liberty,’ rejoined the youthful monarch, ‘and to solace myself with the company of one dear familiar friend, were it but a day.’

‘Thou art a perverse boy, and knowest not the value of a real friend when thou hast found one,’ said

Dunstan reproachfully. ‘Thou deemest me harsh, and my counsels bitter, because, instead of dissembling with thy folly, I labor to convince thee that a king is the property of the nation that permits his authority, and that it behoves him to sacrifice his dearest wishes where they interfere with the duty he owes to his people.’

‘Nay, but, my father,’ said Edward, ‘my present desire is so simple in its nature, that it concerneth no one beside myself, or I would not urge it.’

‘It is, I know, of no avail to reason with thy perversity, to-day,’ said Dunstan impatiently. ‘What wouldst thou?’

‘I would fain hunt the deer in my royal chase of Wareham,’ replied the king in a hurried voice, being awed by the stern manner of his preceptor into dissembling half his wish.

‘Is that all?’ demanded Dunstan, fixing his penetrating eye upon the varying cheek of the youthful king; ‘thou mightest well call thine a simple wish, and if thou hadst added foolish thou hadst not said amiss.’

‘I knew thou wouldst call it so, my Lord Archbishop,’ said the king turning away.

‘Nay, Edward, nay, this is mere childishness,’ resumed the archbishop, taking the feverish hand of his

royal charge, 'if hunting the deer be thy desire, far be it from me to withstand thee in such a trifle, especially as thou thinkest the fresh air and jocund exercise of following the hound and horn will restore thy health and spirits; but why shouldst thou speak of the distant woods of Wareham for thy divitissement, when thou hast thy royal and wide extended forest and chase of Waltham so close to thy loving city of London, that thou mayest enjoy goodly pastime there this very day, with thy noble thanes, and earldormen and trusty burgesses for thy company and guards ? '

' No,' replied the king, ' I love not to seek my game amidst such gaping crowds of idle followers, and I will not hunt at Waltham to-day.'

' Thou shalt find goodly sport in the fair forests of Windsor, if thou wilt seek it there,' said Dunstan, ' or in thy chase at Sheen, or at Greenwich and the Black-heath.'

' I do not incline to hunt at Windsor,' replied the King, ' nor yet at Sheen, nor Greenwich, nor the Black-heath, nor any where but at Wareham, where my royal father was wont to rouse the deer.'

' Wareham is too near to Corfe Castle, the abode of the bold bad woman, thy guileful stepdame Elfrida,' replied Dunstan. ' It is a vicinity fraught with peril to thee, and thou shalt not go thither, Edward.'

Edward was sad and sullen during the remainder of the day.

The next morning there was an evident access of the low fever that hung about the young king; he was languid and dispirited, and would neither attend to his studies, nor enter into any of the little plans laid out for his amusement by his courtiers at Dunstan's instigation.

When Dunstan perceived this, and observed that his royal pupil sickened and rejected his food from day to day, he said to him again, 'Edward, what wouldest thou ?'

'I told thee before,' replied the youth, 'but it was in vain, that I did but desire to breathe the sweet air of the Dorsetshire hills and downs, and to hunt the deer in my pleasant woods of Wareham, and lo ! thou didst refuse me this little thing.'

'Because I saw thou wert like a foolish bird, wilfully bent on falling into the snare of the cunning fowler,' returned Dunstan, 'and I know thou hast now only revealed a part of thy purpose, which is to visit Corfe Castle.'

A deep blush overspread the pale cheek of the young king, as he protested that he had no such intention.

'I fear thou dost dissemble with thy true friend, King Edward,' said the archbishop. 'In troth, my

son, it is only natural that thou shouldst desire to embrace thy brother Ethelred; but give up this wild whim of thine, and I will send for the young prince to London when a convenient season shall befall.'

A feeling of false shame withheld the king from acknowledging that he had not dealt candidly in the matter, and he redoubled his protestations that his whole desire was simply to spend a few days in hunting the game in Wareham forest, which thing he prayed the Archbishop not to deny him.'

'Thou shalt go,' said Dunstan after a long pause, 'but on condition that thou dost not visit Corfe Castle, nor hold any intercourse with the Queen Elfrida, nor any of her people.'

Edward accepted the terms, but in the secret hope that accident would bring him to a sight of his brother without a direct violation of his promise.

'The word of a king ought to be an obligation more sacred than the oath of another man,' said Dunstan when they parted; 'as you observe yours, so be your speed, my son.'

Indisposition, languor, and melancholy, were alike forgotten by Edward, when, with a gallant train of nobles and gentles, attended by jolly hunters and falconers, with hawks and hounds, he left London to follow the sylvan sports in the fair wolds and vales of Dorsetshire.

They set forth with merry blasts of horns, baying of hounds, prancing of steeds, waving of plumes and broidered scarfs and mantles, jingling of falcon bells and blithesome caroling of jocund voices, so that all who met them paused to admire their goodly array and sprightly cheer; but Dunstan beheld the departure of his royal charge with a sort of prophetic fear which he could neither repress nor hide.

‘Thou goest, Edward,’ said he, when he bestowed his parting blessing upon him—‘thou goest like a foolish bird from beneath its mother’s wing ere it be fully fledged for flight; God grant that thou escape the jaws of the serpent that are even now expanded to devour thee.’

Edward was touched, and indeed surprised, at the pathetic tenderness of his stern preceptor’s solemn farewell; for Dunstan was an austere man, who, generally speaking, appeared dead to all human affections, and insensible to the softer emotions of the human heart. Yet now he folded the young king in his arms, and wept over him like a mother over the child of her bosom, who is about to be torn from her for ever.

Edward’s purpose was shaken, and for a moment he felt disposed to forego his long-wished and eagerly-anticipated journey, but the temptation was too strong to be thus easily resigned. It is a difficult

matter for young people, especially princes, to know who are their real friends. The young king, who had always been accustomed in his childhood to receive deceitful flattery and caresses from Elfrida, could not prevail upon himself, notwithstanding her treasonable attempts to supplant him in the succession, to regard her as a personal enemy. He knew her to be ambitious, but he could not believe that she was wicked ; on the contrary, he excused her conspiring to exclude him from the throne on the plea of her natural preference for her own son, and he secretly considered Dunstan's opinions respecting her as harsh and injurious, although he had never ventured in direct terms to tell him so. The archbishop, though tenderly attached to his pupil, and laboring incessantly to promote his interest, was too stern and unbending a character to study to please him. He had a plain and uncompromising manner of reproofing his faults and telling him unwelcome truths, which had the effect of wounding his self-love and offending his pride.

It is a correct observation, that people will sooner forgive a serious injury than overlook an affront, and Edward, although his step-mother had endeavored to deprive him of a throne, was inclined to regard her more in the light of a friend than the man who had successfully vindicated his rights, and watched day and night for his weal. But then, Elfrida had flattered his foibles,

and during his father's life had procured him a thousand improper indulgences ; while Dunstan controled his inclinations wherever he considered it for his interest so to do, and subjected him to the restraints of a useful and virtuous education.

It was with feelings of the deepest regret that this faithful guardian consented to the departure of his royal pupil, especially as he considered it incompatible with his sacred calling, venerable age, and high vocation, to accompany the court on a hunting party. To the best of his power he provided against any imprudence on the part of the young king, by surrounding his person with a sufficient number of grave and incorruptible counsellors, whose wisdom and authority he hoped would restrain the vivacity and rash daring of that gay company.

The impression of his guardian's solemn warning and unwonted tears at parting remained for some days on the mind of the young king, and strengthened his resolution of doing nothing in direct violation of his promise, though he continued to indulge a secret hope that some lucky chance might afford him the pleasure of an interview with Prince Ethelred and the Queen, for he certainly cherished a desire of seeing the guileful Elfrida as well as her son. Wareham Chase was only six miles distant from Corfe Castle, and, contrary to the advice of the sage monitors to

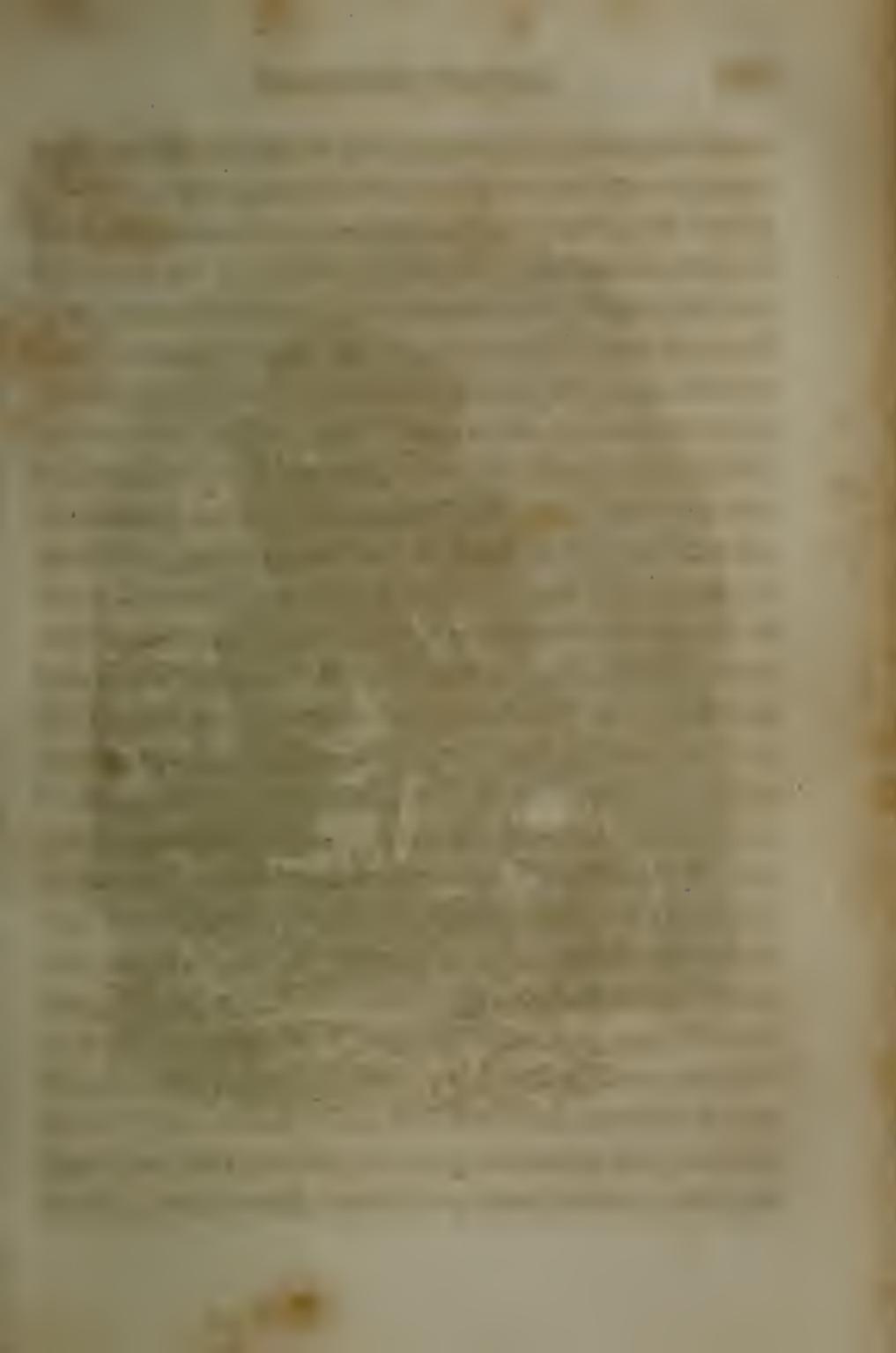
whom the archbishop had delegated his trust, he continued to follow the game in that vicinity.

One day, when he had, as much by design as accident, outridden his train in pursuit of a white doe of peculiar beauty and fleetness, he perceived through a forest vista the towers of Corfe Castle rising in the distance, over wood and vale, like the gray crown of the richly-varied landscape.

At that sight a thousand sweet and pleasant remembrances of his early days, connected with that beloved spot, rushed to the mind of the young king, and filled his eyes with tears. The boisterous excitement of the chase was forgotten, and, dropping his silken bridle on the neck of his gallant gray, he gave himself up to pensive and regretful feelings on the subject of its being denied him to revisit the home of his childhood.

‘And thou, my fair-haired brother,’ said he, ‘who art now perchance tossing the ball in the castle court, or chasing the butterfly from flower to flower over the garden lawns and gay parterres, in the thoughtless glee of thine happy age, thou thinkest not, I ween, that the fond brother in whose bosom thou wert wont so oft to nestle when tired with playful gambols, is so near, if indeed thou dost still remember him.’

While the young king was still indulging in these thoughts, a strange sharp cry near him caused him to





look round, when, to his surprise, a grotesque little creature, that appeared neither like a child nor an animal, but something between both, sprang out of a thicket near him, and coiling itself up in the form of a ball, rolled down the hill before him. Edward's curiosity was excited, and he spurred his horse forward to overtake it, but when the creature perceived his intention, he bounded up, and erecting himself to his full height, which did not appear to be above two feet, he whirled his long lean arms aloft, and clapping his hands above his head, uttered a cry so long and shrill that it pierced the king's ears with a painful sensation, and was answered back by a thousand echoes from grot and hill, in the deep solitude of Wareham forest. The tales of malign fairies and woodland imps were then in common belief, and the young king thought it possible that this singular creature, whom he had thus unexpectedly encountered, might be one of these mysterious beings of whom he had heard so much. But then he had also a shadowy remembrance of having seen in his early childhood a sprightly animal that bore a grotesque resemblance, both in form and face, to a diminutive man, which played a thousand antic tricks, and was greatly caressed by the queen and her ladies; but it had either been stolen or made its escape from the palace of Corfe into the neighboring woods; and though a period of nine or ten years had

elapsed since this event, King Edward was simple enough to believe that this was the veritable creature whose loss had been so deeply lamented by all the pages and females of the royal household, and he determined to overtake it, if possible, whether it were monkey, fairy, or imp.

But the object of his pursuit, however diminutive in person, was more than a match in swiftness of foot for the fleet hunter on which the king was mounted, and, like the goblin page in Sir Walter Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, where Edward 'rode one mile he ran four,' yet with provoking subtlety he continued always to keep in sight, as if he enjoyed the race and wished to continue it. Sometimes, when he had climbed a hill, whose steep rugged ascent was scaled with difficulty by the royal steed, he paused on the brow, laughing with malicious glee, and swinging himself from bough to bough among the embowering trees, till the king was nearly upon him, then darting forward with the speed of an arrow, he resumed his flight, and in a few minutes distanced his pursuer. Sometimes, when Edward thought he had entirely lost all trace of the tantalizing elf, and was meditating how he should recover the track from which he had so widely deviated, he heard the same sharp shrill cry that had first announced his appearance close to his ear, and perceived a round rough head, covered with

shaggy brown locks of tangled hair, through which peered a pair of small keen black eyes, peeping amidst the foliage or clustering ivy of some gnarled oak that wreathed its low fantastic arms across the path, from which, as soon as he perceived he was observed, he leaped with a sudden bound, and clapping his hands and shouting at the top of his voice, started away again down some opening glade of the forest, leaving horse and rider far behind. Both were now thoroughly hot and weary ; the young king, who had been on horseback ever since daybreak, and fasting withal, thought of giving up this unprofitable chase as a matter of necessity, on account of the jaded condition of his good steed, and his own fatigue and faintness. But the object of his pursuit appeared in still worse plight, limped as if lame, and sometimes rested on the green turf as if thoroughly exhausted, weeping and uttering low moaning plaints, and King Edward thought he was now secure of his prize, especially as they had reached the farthest boundary of the forest, and were on the verge of an open park, towards which the urchin began to creep on all fours, occasionally rolling himself over and over at a great rate.

‘ This,’ thought the young king, ‘ is his last effort, and I shall presently overtake him on the plain when once he loses the vantage of the underwood and thickets ; ’ and lest he should alarm him into plunging a-

midst its tangled mazes once more, he followed him at a cautious distance till he emerged from the forest shades, and proceeded at a gentle pace across the park, the enclosure of which they had entered.

Edward had been led on from glade to glade through the green mead, in his eager pursuit of the wily urchin, without pausing to examine the scenery through which he rode, or he might possibly have recognised many objects familiar to him in days past ; nor was it till he had leaped the enclosure of the park, and looked round, that he discovered he was in the immediate vicinity, almost at the gates of Corfe Castle, which rose before him in all its well remembered regal grandeur, as in the days when his father, King Edgar, kept court there. The intermediate time, the important events that had since befallen the youthful monarch, the solemn warning of his guardian against his venturing near this much loved abode of his childhood, and his own promise not to do so, were alike forgotten by King Edward when he found himself so unexpectedly on the spot to which he had, in fact, been artfully allured by Wulstan, the queen's dwarf, the mishappen little elf, who had led him such a weary chase through the forest, and now, uttering an impish yell, fled down the broad avenue of oaks that led to the castle with the speed of a lapwing, and seizing the bugle that hung at the portal, blew a blast that

drew all the inhabitants to the windows and balconies, to learn the meaning of the summons.

The king, perceiving that it would now be impossible for him to withdraw unobserved, considered that it would have a very mean appearance if, after having been seen on the demesne of Queen Elfrida, he retreated without paying his respects to her; and by no means regretting that the rules of courtesy would afford an excuse to himself for departing from a promise which had been so reluctantly wrung from him, he advanced towards the castle.

The queen, who was perfectly aware of his approach, hastened to the gates to receive him, and offering him the homage of her knee, entreated him, 'to enter and partake of the banquet which she had prepared in anticipation of this visit, on hearing that he was hunting the deer in the neighboring forest of Wareham.'

Notwithstanding the fascinating sweetness of the queen's address, and the persuasive softness of her voice and language, there was an expression lurking in the sidelong glance of her large blue eye, and something in the deceitful blandishment of her voice and manner, that, in spite of his partial opinion of her character, recalled the archbishop's impressive warn-

ing, and gave the king an idea that she meditated some sinister design.

This secret misgiving induced him to decline entering the castle, 'on account,' he said, 'of the lateness of the hour, and the expediency of his returning immediately to Wareham, lest his court should take the alarm at his protracted absence.'

'Thou art hot and weary, my royal lord,' replied the queen, respectfully kissing the hand of the youthful monarch, 'and thou wilt not surely depart till thou hast, at least, tasted a cup of spiced hippocras, if thou wilt not feast with me to-day.'

Edward was not willing to offend the queen by declining this offer, especially as he was fatigued, and stood in need of refreshment, and was, moreover, too much inclined to linger near the much-loved abode of his childhood; and while Elfrida took the silver goblet from her bower maiden, who stood holding it on a richly chased salver, he eagerly inquired for his young brother.

'Thy servant, Ethelred, is sick within the castle, or he had come with me to the gate to offer homage to his lord,' replied the queen. 'He hath long pined for thy presence, like a plant that hath been deprived of sunshine.'

'Send quickly, my lady mother, and fetch him

hither,' exclaimed the king: 'I also have panted to embrace him.'

'*Drink hael** first, my gracious lord,' replied Elfrida, presenting the cup to the king.

He received it with a smile, and bowing courteously to the queen, repeated the accustomed salutation of '*Waes hael*,' and raised it to his lips, but the same moment he felt the stab of an assassin's dagger from behind. He dropped the fatal goblet from his hand, and cast a look of keen but silent reproach on his perfidious step-mother; but ere he could recover his bridle rein, to turn his steed for flight, the deadly thrust was repeated, and his treacherous assailants closed about him to prevent his escape.

Indignation at the deep-laid iniquity of the snare into which he had suffered himself to fall thus easily, rendered the young king insensible for a moment to the smart of his wounds; but fully aware of the desperation of his situation, he struck the rowels into the sides of his mettled gray, and the good steed, as if equally conscious of his master's peril, with one gallant bound broke through the murderous circle, and dashed across the plain with the speed of an arrow just discharged from the bow, and presently distanced

* The Saxon phrase for drinking health, from which expression that once general custom was derived, which means, "Wish health," or "I wish your health."

the pursuit of the traitors, who continued to trace the course the wounded king had taken by the red life-drops that tracked his path through the forest.

The last sound that fell on Edward's ear was the piercing cry of a child in mingled grief and terror,—it was the voice of his brother Ethelred, who, on beholding the barbarous deed from a window of the castle, filled the air with his shrieks and lamentations. The assurances of his guilty mother, that it was for his sake, and to make him a king, that the crime had been perpetrated, instead of consoling him, increased his distress to such a passionate degree, that the queen, who considered his tears a reproach to herself, becoming infuriated at what she styled his unseasonable sorrow, threw herself upon him, and beat him in so violent a manner* that it was for some time a matter of doubt to those about her whether she had not slain her own son in the ungovernable transport of her rage,—that son, for whose advancement she had the moment previous caused so deadly a crime to be perpetrated in her very presence.

The unfortunate Edward meantime, though he had succeeded in outstripping the pursuit of his ruthless enemies, was sensible of the approach of a foe whom

* "With a wax altar taper," says the Saxon chroniclers, "that being the first weapon that fell in the way of this furious and unreasonable woman."

he could neither resist nor flee from. Life ebbed apace from his unstaunched wounds, the landscape reeled in confusion before his swimming eyes, he struggled with the deadly faintness that was stealing over him, and labored to rally his failing powers ; but the hand of death was heavy at his heart ; the reins dropped from his relaxing grasp, and he fell from the saddle to the ground.

It is related that the foot unfortunately catching in the stirrup, the body of the king, whether dead or living is not exactly known, was much mangled, in consequence of being dragged at a rapid rate along the ground by the terrified horse, which at length stopped of his own accord, at the gate of a blind widow's cottage. This lonely woman, notwithstanding the deprivation of sight under which she labored, ascertained that some fatal accident had befallen the unfortunate youth, and though ignorant of his rank, she humanely carried the bleeding body into her humble dwelling, and laid it on her own bed, while she hastened to procure assistance.

The wicked Elfrida, whose emissaries had tracked the horse to this place, sought to conceal her crime by causing the corpse of the murdered king to be thrown down a deep well ; but there, in consequence of the evidence of the blind widow, it was presently discov-

ered by his sorrowful friends, and her guilt was proclaimed to the whole world, by the indignant Archbishop Dunstan, at the coronation of her son Ethelred, and he then predicted that a crown so obtained could never prosper with the descendants of this bad woman.

The high rank of the queen protected her from the punishment due to her crime ; but she was regarded with hatred and contempt by all mankind ; and feeling herself an object of horror to her own son, for whose advancement she had perpetrated this barbarous deed, and above all, tormented by the fearful stings of her own accusing conscience, she retired to the gloomy shades of a convent, where she spent the residue of her days, vainly endeavoring, by constant penances and fasts, to expiate her crime.

THE

SONS OF THE CONQUEROR.

JUST on the confines of the New Forest stood a low tenement, belonging to an old Saxon ceorl or churl called Redwald. This cottage was not always lonely, though it stood the last in a long pleasant pastoral village, chiefly inhabited by herdsmen, who were all united in the bonds of relationship in different degrees, being the descendants of one family, who had in times gone by settled on a fruitful spot in Hampshire abounding in pasture and water.

This happy village was a little community, linked together by the strongest ties of love and neighbourhood; always ready to serve and assist each other, the affections of the inhabitants were never extended beyond their own little circle.

Such was their situation when William the Conqueror issued his lawless edict to turn the most fertile spot in Hampshire into a hunting ground or chase, to effect which he razed and destroyed thirty-six chur-

ches, and depopulated a much greater number of towns, villages, and pleasant hamlets. This spot now occupies an extent of thirty or forty miles, and in those fearful days was of much greater circumference. From the time of the Norman conquest it has been known by the name of the New Forest.

When the agents of the Norman despot drove out the whole township of Redwald's kindred, and levelled their pleasant and comfortable cottages with the dust, they spared the old man's homestead, not because they were actuated by merciful feelings, but because it lay without the boundary prescribed by the tyrant for the confines of his chase. Thus the dwelling of Redwald was left standing but utterly desolate, his friends, neighbors, and kin being violently driven from their birth-places, and their happy hearths laid bare for wild creatures and the beasts of the forest to couch upon. Some of the neighbors went one way, some another; all shunned the heart-breaking sight of destruction, and dreaded to settle in the vicinity of a place from which they had been so lawlessly expelled: and the old Saxon, Redwald, saw himself surrounded by a lonesome desert in a place which within a few weeks had been a scene of cheerful industry. Redwald's heart swelled as if it would have burst, when he saw the last lingerer depart from the shelter he had afforded him, to seek his fortune in some distant part

of England; he too would have deserted a spot now become hateful to him, and left the home that the caprice of the conqueror had spared, but he had those around him who looked up to him for bread, the infant family of a son that had fallen in the battle of Hastings, being one of the hasty levies summoned by King Harold to repel the Norman invasion. As these infant children had likewise lost their mother, their helplessness bound Redwald to the spot where he could find provision for their wants. But the old man's heart yearned after his expatriated neighbors, after the old faces. He became silent and melancholy, and would pass his sabbaths sitting alone on the site of the churchyard, looking on the levelled graves of his ancestors and parents, for the Norman spoiler had desecrated the grave-ground, and levelled the village church. Without priest or service, the Saxon peasant gathered his young grandchildren together, under a spreading yew, which marked what had once been holy ground, and endeavored to offer up a broken worship, consisting of such psalms and hymns as his memory furnished him with, from a long course of attendance of divine service on Sundays and holidays, while the parish and the parish church were in existence. This worship generally ended with a long and bitter recital of the wrongs of his family and people, and with a petition to Heaven to hear the cry of the

oppressed, and requite the misery of the English on the Norman and on his seed, and, above all, to make the very place from which William had driven harmless families and the service of God, the scene of the destruction of those most dear to him.

‘ Marry ! be these your forest homilies and Saxon prayers, old churl ?’ cried a gay voice behind him, as Redwald stood beneath the yew tree with his hands clasped and his white hair waving in the evening breeze, looking upward as he concluded his petition, while his grandchildren, gazing upon him with their round blue eyes expanded, earnestly echoed the customary ‘ Amen’ to a prayer that they scarcely comprehended. It was long since Redwald had heard the sound of a stranger’s voice, and though the words were purely English, they were spoken with a foreign accent that fell harshly on his ear. He looked around, and saw emerging from the underwood that had already begun to encroach on the sacred ground, a handsome youth and two boys ; the elder of the latter carried in his hand a broken bow, and was remarkable for his audacious demeanor, his ruddy complexion, and profusion of red hair ; this was the speaker, as Redwald immediately recognised his voice when he resumed,

‘ If the Conqueror heard the orisons thou offerest up in his behalf, rebellious churl, it were likely that

he left thee neither tongue to pray with, nor eyes to lead thee to break his forest boundaries.'

Redwald trembled at the thought of incurring the personal vengeance of that dreaded Conqueror, and muttered a few words, representing that he was a poor ignorant peasant, who had been deprived by the forest laws of priest and church, and being an unlettered man knew not what to pray on the Sabbath without the aid of the holy man; and that he never broke the forest boundaries excepting on Sundays and holidays, when he went to pray on the place where his church once stood.

'Tut, man! if thou hast neither priest nor church so much the better for thee: look you, this day have I and my brother, and my little nephew, broke not only from my priest, but from a bishop, and not only from a church, but from Winchester cathedral, to play the truant in the good greenwood. Lo! I have broken my bow; cut me, I pray thee, with the whittle that hangeth at thy girdle, a tough straight bough of yew, for men declare that the goodliest English bows be ever made of that tree.'

Redwald ventured to remark that it was not only Sunday eve, but the vigil of Saint Swithin. The young scoffer mocked aloud, and declared that new laws were enforced, whereby the Saxon churls were commanded to toil the whole Sabbath, and the Nor-

man nobles to sport and play ; and that Saxon saints, as belonging to a conquered people, were turned out of the calendar.

Redwald liked his company worse than ever, and gathering his young grand-children together, turned to depart to his cottage, when the little boy addressed a few words in another language to the eldest, the handsome youth, who had not before spoken, and who now, in a courteous tone but such broken English as hardly to be intelligible, asked Redwald whether he could give them any thing to eat, as they were hungry.

Before Redwald could comprehend this request, the red-haired boy exclaimed—

‘Hast never a hole, or den, or sty in the forest, where thee and the young boors burrow for the night ? If so, belike thou hast some food ; and we are weary and hungry enough to eat with thee, even if it were but husks.’

‘I told you before, young sir,’ said Redwald, ‘that my homestead was not in the forest ; and though you be the most unmannerly youth I ever met withal, it shall never be said that Redwald the Saxon sent the hungry empty from his door.’

The young strangers expressed their surprise to each other when they saw the homely dainties that were heaped on the board of the Saxon farmer ; ev-

ery thing delicious, that could be compounded with eggs, milk, and honey, was set before them, with old strong cider made from redstreak apples, the produce of the orchard in which the cottage was embowered. The young guests paid ample respect to the good cheer before them, especially the red-haired boy, who ate like a wolf, and behaved like a swine. When he had at length appeased his voracious appetite, he filled and emptied the wooden cup so often with cider, that his elder companion began to remonstrate in the Norman language, but he met with a reply in the same tongue, accompanied by a gesture so rude and ferocious that he did not again attempt to interfere, excepting by removing the wine vessel out of the reach of the young child, who seemed inclined to follow the evil example before him.

When left to his own devices, the ferocious spirit of the other youth began to grow tamer, and subside into his usual tone of boasting and swaggering, and he took it into his head to be mortified that the sturdy Saxon peasant, notwithstanding the hints he had thrown out, had manifested no awe at his presence, nor seemed to have the slightest idea of his rank, and he was resolved that he should not for another moment remain in ignorance of it. So filling once more the cup, he turned round with a pompous air to the



I let you have any more of this strong drink, I shall have you commit sacrilege next, and fancy yourself the son of his Holiness the Pope !'

'Then whom think you we be ?' asked Rufus, much mortified at the disappearance of the good cheer.

'By your unnurtured bearing,' replied the Saxon, 'I should guess you to be some runaway Norman horseboy, or peradventure a pert page who has, with his playmates, truanted from the court at Winchester.'

Nothing could exceed the wrath and fury of the Red Prince at this intimation ; he stamped on the earthen floor, and screamed unintelligibly with passion ; his brother, who did not understand sufficient English to comprehend the passing scene, was some time before he could prevail on William to explain in their native tongue the conversation that had thrown him into such transports ; when at last the provocation was translated by his brother into Norman French, he laughed heartily at the peasant's mistake, and wished that he had been master of sufficient English to carry on the joke.

At that instant a troop of forest rangers, accompanied by Norman men at arms, dressed in hauberks or chained mail, rode up to the cottage, and demanded vociferously if the young princes had been seen to pass that way. The appearance of Prince Richard at the door quieted their alarm, but he was forced to

exert all the authority of an elder brother to avert the lawless wrath of young William, who commanded the men at arms to seize his host, and hang him on the branches of the yew tree with his grand-children round him ; but the better spirit of Prince Richard prevailing, prevented him from making so atrocious a return for the Saxon peasant's hospitality. He forced his furious brother from the cottage, and then, by a few words of imperfect English and a courteous gesture, he expressed a sense of obligation to his host, and bade him farewell.

Nor did the gratitude of Prince Richard stop there ; the next morning he sent to Redwald by a trusty follower who understood English, a purse of gold marks, and his advice to leave the cottage as soon as possible.

Redwald did not neglect this warning, and before noon was on his way with his grand-children to Southampton, from whence he embarked for Brittany, which had been, from the first northern invasions of England, a place of refuge for British exiles. Redwald did not fly an hour too soon, for that very night a band of forest rangers arrived at his deserted home, with fire and axes, and after totally destroying the peaceful dwelling under pretence that it stood too near the haunts of the king's game, they sought in vain for the peaceful inhabitants, in order to gratify the hatred of the young tyrant, who had obtained

from his despot father license to avenge his mortified vanity by the destruction of a harmless family. The site of the cottage, and its useful and bowery orchard, was included in a wider sweep of ground, and the whole added to the New Forest.

But few years had passed on before retributive judgments fell on the family of the Conqueror in the very scene of his iniquity. His second son, Richard, whose abilities and chivalric qualities had caused the greatest hopes to be formed of him, who was the pride of his father's heart and the delight of his eyes—Richard, for whose brow he had destined the conquered diadem of England, was gored to death by an infuriated stag, which he attacked imprudently while the poor animal was standing at bay to defend his life. Not long after this tragic event, the young boy, who has been mentioned in this tale as the son of Prince Robert, was killed by a fall from his horse when hunting in the New Forest. These were the most beloved objects of the Conqueror's heart, and these he saw descend into untimely graves before him.

As for William Rufus, his fate is more generally known. When the measure of his crimes was full, the Red King, as he was called by his miserable subjects, was slain in the same New Forest by an arrow from the bow of his favorite knight, Sir Walter Tyrell. He was killed accidentally by the arrow that was

shot at a doe glancing against the branch of a tree, and from thence it rebounded to the king's bosom, who never spoke after he was wounded ; but perhaps the dying tyrant, before the light forever left his eyes, might recognise the old yew tree, under which in his turbulent boyhood he had met the Saxon peasant Redwald, although by his continued despotic encroachments, that yew, and the neighboring cottage site, was now in the heart of the New Forest.

WOLSEY BRIDGE ;

OR

THE BOY BACHELOR.

ON the south side of the ancient passage leading from the street to the churchyard of St. Nicholas, was formerly situated, the commodious house of Thomas Wolsey, a substantial butcher and grazier, of the town of Ipswich, in the sixteenth century.

This Thomas Wolsey was one of those persons with whom the acquisition of wealth appears to be the sole purpose of existence. It was his boast 'that he had thrice trebled the patrimony he had derived from his father,' from whom he had inherited his flourishing business, besides some personal property.

Acting in direct contradiction to that injunction of the royal psalmist, 'If riches increase, set not your heart upon them,' his very soul appeared to dwell in his money bags, his well attended shambles, or the pleasant lowland pastures where the numerous flocks and herds grazed, the profits on which he calculated would so materially improve his store. He made no show

no figure among his fellow townsmen ; never exchanging his long blue linen gown, leathern girdle, and coarse brown hose, for any other apparel, except on a Sunday, when he wore a plain substantial suit of sad colored cloth, garnished with silver buttons, and the polished steel and huge sheath knife, which he usually wore at his side, were exchanged for a silver hilted dagger and an antique rosary and crucifix.

Satisfied with the conviction that he was one of the wealthiest tradesmen in Ipswich, he saw no reason for exciting the envy of the poor or the ill will of the rich, by any outward demonstration of the fact, but continued to live in the same snug plain manner to which he had been accustomed in his early days, making it the chief desire of his heart that his only son, Thomas, should tread in his steps, and succeed him in his prosperous and well established business, with the same economical habits and an equally laudable care for the main chance.

The maternal pride of his wife Joan, who was the descendant of a family that could boast of gentle blood, prompted the secret hope that the ready wit and studious habits, together with the clerkly skill and learned lore which the boy had already acquired at the grammar school, might qualify him for something better than the greasy craft of a butcher, and perhaps one day elevate him to the situation of port reeve or

town clerk. But for the boy himself, his youthful ambition pointed at higher marks than the golden speculations of trade, or the attainment of lucrative offices and civic honors in his native town.

From the first moment he entered the grammar school, and took his place on the lowest seat there, he determined to occupy the highest, and to this, in an almost incredibly brief period of time, he had rapidly ascended ; and, though only just entering his twelfth year, he was now the head boy in the school, and in the opinion of his unlearned father, ‘knew more than was good for him.’

As soon, indeed, as his son Thomas had learned to write a ‘fair clerkly hand, to cast accounts, and construe a page in the Breviary,’ he considered his education complete, and was desirous of saving the expense of keeping him longer at school ; but here he was overruled by his more liberal minded wife, Joan, who, out of the savings of her own privy purse, paid the quarterly sum of eight-pence to the master of the school, for the further instruction of her hopeful boy Thomas, whose abilities she regarded as little less than miraculous. Persons better qualified than the good wife, Joan Wolsey, to judge of the natural talents and precocious acquirements of her son, had also spoken in high terms of his progress in the learned languages, and predicted great things of him

These were personages of no less importance than the head master of the Ipswich grammar school, and the parish priest of St. Nicholas, the latter of whom was a frequent visitor at the hospitable messuage of master Thomas Wolsey the elder, on the ostensible business of chopping Latin with young Thomas, and correcting his Greek exercises for him; but no doubt the spiced tankards of flowing ale, and the smoking beef steaks, cut from the very choicest part of the ox, and temptingly cooked by the well skilled hands of that accomplished housewife, Joan Wolsey, to reward him for his good report of her darling boy's proficiency, had some influence in drawing father Boniface thither so often.

The bishop of the diocese himself had condescended to bestow unqualified praise on the graceful and eloquent manner in which, when he visited the school, young Wolsey had delivered the complimentary Latin oration, on that occasion. The good natured prelate had even condescended to pat his curly head on the conclusion of the address, and to say, 'Spoken like a cardinal, my little man!'

From that moment young Wolsey had made up his mind as to his future destiny. It was to no purpose that his father tried the alternate eloquence of entreaties, reasoning, promises, and threats, to detach him from his engrossing studies, and induce him to

turn his attention to the lucrative business of a butcher and grazier. The idea of such servilely earned pelf was revolting to the excited imagination of the youthful student, whose mind was full of classic imagery, and intent on the attainment of academic honors, the steps by which he projected to ascend to the more elevated objects of his ambition.

The church was, in those days, the only avenue through which talented persons of obscure birth might hope to arrive at greatness, and young Wolsey replied to all his father's exordiums urging him to attend to the cattle market, the slaughter house, or the shambles, by announcing his intention of becoming an ecclesiastic.

The flush of anger with which this unwelcome declaration had clouded the brow of the elder Wolsey was perfectly perceptible when he returned home after the fatigues of the day to take his evening meal, which his wife, Joan, was busily engaged in preparing for him over the fire with her own hands.

'I knew how it would turn out all along of your folly, mistress, in keeping the boy loitering away his time and learning all manner of evil habits at the grammar school, when he ought to have been bound apprentice to me, and learning our honest craft, for the last two years,' muttered the malcontent butcher,

throwing himself into his large arm chair, lined with sheepskins.

‘What a coil the woman keeps up with her frying pan,’ continued he peevishly, on perceiving that the discreet Joan appeared disposed to drown the ebullitions of his wrath in the hissing and bubbling of the fat in her pan, as she artfully redoubled her assiduity in shaking it over the blazing hearth.

‘Why, Joan,’ pursued he, ‘one cannot hear oneself speak for the noise you make.’

‘The noise is all of your own making, I trow, master,’ replied Joan, continuing to stir her hissing sputtering pan briskly as she spoke.

‘I say, leave off that frizzling with the fat in that odious pan,’ vociferated he.

‘So I will, master, if you wish to have burnt collops for your supper to-night,’ replied Joan meekly.

‘I don’t care whether I have any supper at all,’ replied the butcher testily; ‘I am vexed, mistress.’

‘Good lack! what should happen to vex you, master?’ responded his wife. ‘I am sure the world always seems to wag the way you’d have it go; but losses and crosses in business will chance, even to the most prosperous, at times. Is one of your fat beasts dead?’

‘No!’

‘Some of your sheep been stolen?’

‘No!’

‘Mayhap then, some customer, whom you have suffered to run up a long score, is either dead or bankrupt?’

‘Worse than that, mistress.’

‘I prythee, good Thomas, let me hear the truth at once,’ exclaimed the startled Joan, upsetting the frying pan into the fire in her alarm. ‘The misfortune must be great that hath befallen you, if it be reckoned by you worse than the loss of money.’

‘Why, mistress, do not you reckon the perverse inclinations of one’s own flesh and blood a more serious calamity than loss of substance?’

‘Ay, master; but that is a trial we have never had the sorrow of knowing since our only son, Thomas, albeit I say it who ought not, is the most dutiful, diligent, and loving lad, that ever blessed a parent’s heart,’ said the fond mother, melting into tears of tenderness as she spoke.

‘Hold thy peace, dame,’ cried the indignant husband, darting a look of angry reproach on the offending youth, who had been comfortably reposing himself on an oaken settle by the fire side, reading Virgil’s *Eneid* by the light of the blazing embers, during the whole of the discussion, without concerning himself about any thing, save to preserve the beloved vol-

ume from being sprayed by the fat which the frying pan, in falling, had scattered in all directions. ‘That lad, on whom you bestow such foolish commendations,’ pursued old Wolsey; ‘that lad, whatever might have been his former virtuous inclinations, hath now disappointed all my hopes, for he hath turned an errant scape-grace, and refuseth to become a butcher, though the shambles he would inherit from me are the largest, the most commodious, and the best frequented with ready-penny customers, of any on the market hill. Moreover, it is a business in which his grandfather got money, and I, following in his good steps, with still better success, have become—I scorn to boast, but the truth may be spoken without blame—one of the wealthiest tradesmen in the borough.’

‘Then the less need, my master, of enforcing such a clever lad as our Thomas to follow a craft which is so unsuitable for a scholar,’ observed Joan.

‘There,’ groaned the butcher, ‘was the folly of making him one, which hath been the means of teaching him to slight the main chance, and to turn his head with pagan poesies or monkish lore. Would you believe it, mistress Joan,—he hath had the audacity to profess his desire of becoming a student at the university of Oxenford?’

‘And why should he not, master Wolsey, since he

promiseth to become a learned clerk ?' asked the proud mother.

' To what purpose should he go thither ?' said the father.

' Marry, master, to increase his learning, and to put him in the way of becoming a great man,' responded mistress Joan.

' A great man, forsooth !' echoed her husband contemptuously ; ' who ever heard of a butcher's son becoming a person of distinction ?'

' I have heard, Sir,' said young Wolsey, closing his book eagerly ; ' I have heard of a destitute swineherd becoming a pope.'

' Indeed !' ejaculated his father with an air of incredulity.

' Yes, Sir, it was Nicholas Brekespeare, afterwards Pope Adrian the Fourth, the only Englishman who ever filled the papal chair, but perhaps not the last whom learning, combined with persevering enterprise, may conduct to that eminence.'

' Ho ! ho ! ho !' cried the butcher, bursting into a loud laugh ; ' I wist not of the high mark at which your ambition aimeth, son Thomas ! Well, if enabling you to become a servitor in Magdalen College will advance your holiness one step towards the possession of St. Peter's keys, I will not withhold my assistance and my blessing, though much I doubt wheth-

er it will carry thee into the Vatican, or whatever you call it, of which you and father Boniface are always talking.'

' And what if it do not carry him quite so far, master,' interposed Joan, ' didst thou never hear of the proverb, He who reacheth after a gown of cloth of gold shall scarcely fail of getting one of the sleeves ? '

' Ay, mother ! ' cried young Wolsey; ' and when I am a cardinal, my father will thank you for the parable.'

' Ah ! if I ever live to see that day, son Thomas ! ' observed the butcher.

' Why should you doubt it, master ? ' asked mistress Joan.

' Because, wife, it is easy to talk of dignities and honors, but to obtain them would be attended with difficulties, which I doubt our simple son, Thomas, will find insurmountable.'

' I shall, at least, lose nothing in making the attempt,' observed young Wolsey.

' There is your mistake, boy ; you will lose something very considerable,' replied his father.

' Dear father, what can that be for which the learning I shall acquire will not make me ample amends ? '

' The most flourishing butchery in Ipswich, simpleton ! which, if once lost through your inconsiderate folly, you may study till doomsday, and acquire all

the learning in popedom and heathenesse into the bargain, without being able to reestablish it in its present prosperity,' returned the mortified father with a groan.

A smile, which the younger Wolsey strove in vain to repress, played over his features at these words.

'Ay, scorn and slight the substantial good that is within your reach for the sake of the vain shadow which is beyond your power to obtain, Thomas Wolsey,' said his father with great bitterness.

'My dear father, you know little of the powers of the human mind, or of the mighty things which its energies, when once roused, and directed towards one object, may effect.'

'I tell you, Thomas, that the end which you propose is *impossible*.'

'Sir,' replied young Wolsey, 'I have blotted *that word* out of my dictionary.'

'I like your spirit, young man,' said his father, 'albeit, it savoreth a little of presumption.'

'That remains to be proved,' said his son, 'and I am quite ready that my earnestness should be tried by any test you may be inclined to demand.'

'I shall hold you to your word,' replied his father, 'and condition, that if you take up your bachelor's degree within four years of your entering Magdalen College, then shall you proceed in the course of life

on which you are so determinately bent; but if you fail in doing this, then shall you return to my house, and submit your future destiny to my disposal.'

'If I take it not up within two years of my entering the college, barring accidents of sickness or death, then strip me of the learned stole of a clerk of Oxenford, and chain me to your girdle as a butcher's slave for life,' replied the youth with a heightened color.

'Thou hast pledged thyself to that which thou canst not perform, son Thomas,' replied his father. 'Who ever heard of a boy of fourteen taking up a bachelor's degree at Oxenford ?'

'Thou shalt hear of one, anon, mine honored father,' said young Wolsey.

'I will engage that thy mother shall have the finest baron of beef in my shambles to roast for dinner on the day on which I hear that news,' rejoined his father.'

'See that you keep my father to his promise, mother,' said the youth, 'for I shall travel night and day, in hopes of being the first to communicate the intelligence, or at any rate, to arrive in time to come in for a slice of the beef while it be hot.'

The important object being now accomplished of obtaining the consent of the elder Wolsey to his son's entering the university of Oxford, the lad commenced his journey on the following day for that ancient seat of learning. He was on foot, for the sturdy butcher,

his father, though well able to send him thither on a stout pack-horse, attended by one of his own men, was determined to afford no facilities for an enterprise to which he had so little relish.

The loving care of mistress Joan Wolsey had supplied the youthful candidate for scarlet stockings and cardinal's hat with a few silver groats for his expences on the road, and a needful stock of linen and other necessaries, which he carried in a leathern wallet over his shoulder at the end of a stout oaken staff; but that which young Wolsey considered more precious than either money or apparel, was a letter of recommendation from the head master of the Ipswich grammar school to the master of Magdalen College.

This credential obtained for its lonely and friendless bearer that attention which his juvenile appearance, diminutive stature, and his coarse and travel-soiled attire, would most probably have failed of attracting.

Having passed his examination with great credit to himself, he was admitted as a servitor of Magdalen College. In this novel situation young Wolsey had some difficulties, and not a few hardships and privations to contend with; but these, when weighed against the mighty object which engrossed all his thoughts, were as dust in the balance, and the only effect they had was to increase his persevering dili-

gence. At the end of the first term he had made a progress which astonished his masters and fellow students. Before the two years had expired, within which the lad had pledged himself to take up a degree, an attempt which his father, with reason, judged unattainable by a person of his tender age, the good-wife Joan Wolsey, in great haste, entered the shambles, where her husband was preparing to put an uncommonly fine baron of beef into the basket of a nobleman's servant, and laying hands upon it, exclaimed, 'Why, Thomas Wolsey, what are you about to do with that meat ?'

'To send it to the house of my lord, according to order, to be sure, mistress,' replied the butcher, with a look of surprise.

'An it had been ordered by King Henry himself, he should not have it to-day,' said mistress Joan.

'Is your wife delirit, master Wolsey ?' asked the servant.

'One would suppose so by her wild words,' said the astonished butcher, who knew not what to think of the behavior of his usually discreet spouse.

'If I be, master, it is with joy,' replied Joan Wolsey ; 'but the truth is, I came hither to claim the finest baron of beef in the shambles, which you said I should roast for dinner on the day on which you

heard the news of our son, Thomas Wolsey, taking up a bachelor's degree at Oxenford.'

' And who brought you the intelligence, mistress ? ' demanded her husband.

' A joyful messenger, my good man, for it was the boy himself, (blessings on him !) dressed in his bachelor's gown, and bearing the certificate of his admission as a fellow of Magdalen College.'

' Humphrey ! ' cried the delighted father, turning to his head man, ' take that baron of beef home to my house, and help thy mistress to spit it, and put it down to the fire, that my boy bachelor may dine off the best joint in my shambles ; and do you, master Ralph,' added he, turning to his lordship's servant, ' make my duty to my lord, and ask him, if he will be pleased to put up with rump or ribs to-day, since the baron of beef, for which his housekeeper hath sent, was bespoken nearly two years before his order came, and my good dame hath come to claim my pledge in earnest.'

' Which my lord is too strict an observer of his own word to wish you to forfeit on his account, I am sure, master Wolsey,' said Ralph ; ' and when I explain the pleasant cause for which you have made bold to disappoint his lordship of his favorite dish to-day, he, who is himself a scholar and a patron of learning withal, will hold you excused.'

This day being a holiday, the head master of the

Ipswich grammar school, several of young Wolsey's chosen friends among the scholars, and the good-humored curate of St. Nicholas, were invited to partake of the baron of beef which the young bachelor had so honorably earned, and which mistress Joan Wolsey cooked in her most approved style, to the great satisfaction of her husband and the guests.

This was one of the long vacations, but no season of idleness to young Wolsey, whose unremitting application to study impaired his appetite, and rendered him languid and feverish, which his anxious mother perceiving, and feeling some alarm lest his incessant mental toil might injure his naturally feeble constitution, she communicated her uneasiness to her husband, and asked him if he could not contrive some little pleasant employment for him, which would have the effect of diverting him for a few days from his sedentary occupations.

'Ay, ay, dame,' replied old Wolsey, 'I have a choice bit of pastime for the boy; he shall go with Humphrey and Peter and Miles to buy beeves off the Southwold and Reydon commons and marshes.'

'That would do well enough, master, if the lad were any judge of cattle, which I fear, with all his college learning, he is not,' responded mistress Joan.

'You may well say that, mistress,' rejoined the butcher, 'for though he hath been born, bred, and

nourished in the midst of such matters, and he is observant enough in other things, yet I would answer for it, he knoweth not the difference between a fat beast and a lean one, a Scot or a home-bred, yea, scarcely between a long horn or a short ; and were I to send him on this business of mine without my shrewd foreman, Humphrey, to instruct *his* ignorance and detect the knavery of the sellers, he would bring me home pretty bargains of beasts against the Easter festivals. Why these fat monks of Reydon, who are far better skilled in grazing for the Ipswich and Yarmouth markets than in their church Latin, would be sure to palm their old worn-out mortuary cows upon him for fine young heifers, and make him pay the price of three-year-old steers, for their broken-down yoke oxen that had ploughed the convent lands for the last ten years. But, as I said before, Humphrey shall go with him, who is used to their tricks of old, and will bid them half their asking price at a word, which our Thomas would be ashamed of doing to men of their cloth were he left to himself, so he shall only have the pleasant part of the business, to wit, listening to the chaffering, and paying down the money when the price is agreed upon by those who are wiser in such matters than himself.'

‘ And how do you propose for him to perform the

journey, master, for the places whereof you speak are many miles distant ?' said Joan.

‘ Under forty miles, wife, which will be no great stretch for Miles and Peter (who are to drive the cattle) to walk ; as for Thomas, he shall ride my grey mare, and Humphrey can take the black nag, and give Miles and Peter a lift behind him by turns, which will ease their legs, and make it a pleasant journey for them all. Ah ! that part of Suffolk is a fine grazing country to travel through. I am sure I shall envy Thomas the prospect of so many herds and flocks as he will see on those upland meads and salt marshes ; but he will think more of chopping Latin with the monks of Blitheborough, and looking over their old musty books and records, which could never give a hungry man his dinner, than of all the sensible sights he might see by the way.’

‘ Every one to his vocation, master,’ replied Joan Wolsey ; ‘ yours is to feed the bodies, and my Thomas’s will be to nourish the minds of men with a more enduring food than that which you have it in your power to provide.’

‘ Gramercy, mistress !’ said the butcher, with a grin ; ‘ one would think he had been feasting you on some of his improving diet, for you begin to discourse like a doctor.’

The next day, by peep of dawn, the quartette set

forth from St. Nicholas's passage on their expedition, on which no one reckoned more than young Wolsey, who, wearing his college cap and gown, the latter of which was tucked up round his waist, lest its long full skirts should impede his horsemanship, was mounted on his father's easy-pacing grey mare. For the convenience of riding he was accommodated with a pair of the old man's boots, which drew up far above his knees, and were wide enough to admit three pair of legs like the stripling's slender limbs. He rode cautiously at the head of the cavalcade, taking care to keep close to Humphrey, who jogged along very comfortably on the black nag, whose mettle, if ever it had possessed any, was tamed by the wear and tear of fifteen years of service in the butcher's cart.

Miles and Peter trudged steadily along with their quarter staffs in their hands, relying on their own excellent pedestrianism to reach the ultimate place of their destination almost as soon as the horsemen of the party, whose steeds they knew would be sorely jaded before they reached St. Peter's, Wangford, where their master had directed them to crave lodging for the night of the monks of Clugni, who there occupied a cell dependent on the monastery of Thetford, which also was the parent house of the cell at Reydon.

The two saucy knaves occasionally exchanged sly

glances, and cracked dry jokes on the unsuitable array and cautious riding of the young Oxford student, their master's son, and the steady jog-trot of Humphrey, who rode quite at his ease on a soft sheepskin, which supplied the place of a saddle by being tightly buckled with a broad leathern strap under the belly of the black nag, whose quiet temper allowed her to be ridden safely without the aid of stirrups.

The sun rose brightly in a soft April sky by the time they reached Woodbridge. Young Wolsey had now become familiar with the paces of the grey mare and the excitement of the exercise, the beauty of the morning, the invigorating freshness of the air, and lovely succession of new and agreeable objects, contributing to raise his spirits, he soon began to assume a little more of the cavalier, and occasionally used the whip and the spurs, in defiance of all Humphrey's prudential cautions. Nature had well qualified the youthful student, both in form and agility, to play the graceful horseman, and before they arrived at Wickham Market, the skill and boldness with which he managed his steed was a matter of surprise to the whole party.

At this little town they stopped, and refreshed both men and beasts with a substantial breakfast, and then set forward on their journey with renewed spirits. Young Wolsey, who had a purpose of his own to answer, put his father's mare to her speed, and soon left

the pedestrian Peter, and the hapless nag with its double burden, of Humphrey and Miles, far in the rear, regardless of their shouts of 'Fair play, master Thomas ! fair play !' and 'Alack, alack, sir, have a care of master's mare !'

But the stripling, who liked not the repeated hints which Humphrey had given him of the propriety and expediency, to say nothing of the kindness, of giving poor Peter a lift behind him, now they were clear of the houses, was determined to ride forward, not wishing the bachelor's cap and gown to appear in such close fellowship with the butcher's blue and greasy buff of his father's men. Besides, he greatly desired, instead of keeping the jog-trot pace that suited their convenience, to gain an hour or two to spend with the monks of the Holyrood at Blitheborough, and to examine the antiquities, architecture, and localities of that ancient and interesting place, through which the route chalked out for him by his father lay ; but the elder Wolsey had strictly charged Humphrey in his hearing, 'not to permit his young master to delay their journey, by wasting his time and theirs in prating Latin gibberish with the black locusts of Blitheborough,' (as he irreverently styled those worthy anchorites), 'especially as he did not want to deal with them for sheep, the last he had bought off their walks having proved a poor bargain.'

Now young Wolsey, when he heard this caution, secretly resolved to arrange matters so as to enjoy the conference with the monks without either infringing his father's directions, or being pestered with the company of his blue-frocked retainers. So, without allowing himself time to observe the pastoral Benhall, Kelsale, or the picturesque village of Yoxford, which was then, as now, one of the prettiest in Suffolk, or even pausing to bestow more than the tribute of a passing glance of interest on Cockfield's Gothic Hall, at that period newly built, and rising proudly from its embowering woods, he pressed his mare on, and though, as well as her, sorely wearied with the unwonted number of miles he had traversed, his youthful spirits carried him forward with unabated energy, till, on descending the last hill after crossing the extensive track of purple heath, known by the name of Blithborough Sheep walks, that most stately structure, the church of the Holy Trinity, rose before him, not in the dilapidated grandeur which even now strikes the eye of the eastern traveller with astonishment and delight, as, grey with the mantling lichens, and crumbling with the neglect and injuries of revolving centuries, it bursts upon his view, amidst surrounding desolation, but in all the magnificence of the monastic ages of its glory, in the elaborate richness of the florid gothic architecture, untouched by time and unim-

paired by accident, with the bright sunbeams playing and flashing on the many-colored stains of its wide and lofty windows.

Young Wolsey checked his horse, and gazed upon this noble edifice with the enthusiasm natural to the future founder of colleges and gothic buildings ; then slowly, and looking often backwards, he proceeded to the cell and chapel of the Holy-Rood, which indeed was so contiguous to the spot that he was able still to enjoy a close view of the new church, as it was then called, while he partook of the good cheer which the hospitable fraternity produced for his refreshment, and to which the hungry stripling did ample justice. As the bells were chiming for vespers, monastic etiquette compelled him to accompany the monks to their pretty chapel, for which building the traveller would now look in vain, as its only relics are the crumbling group of broken gray arches, so thickly mantled with ivy and crowned with wild flowers, that form such an interesting feature in the landscape of the desolated village of Blitheburgh. When the evening service was concluded, the friendly monks gratified their visitor with an anterior view of the church of the Holy Trinity, and pointed out to him its rich carvings, screens, trellises, and magnificently sculptured and emblazoned roof, not forgetting to call his attention to the antique

tombs which, as tradition reports, once covered the mortal remains of Annas, king of the East Angles, and Ferminius, his son, who were slain in a bloody battle with Penda, the pagan king of Mercia, which was fought in the adjacent marshes of Bulcamp, or Baldkemp. From the leads over the south aisle, they made him observe the fine sea view of Southwold, Walberswick, and the city of Dunwich, well known to him in ecclesiastic history as the ancient metropolitan city of the kingdom of the East Angles, where Saxon monarchs kept court in the olden time, and the bishop of the two counties held his see, till the resistless waves of the German Ocean committed such ravages as compelled the diocesan to remove his episcopal see to Thetford, and afterwards buried that time-honored seat of learning and royalty (Dunwich), with its walls, and brazen gates, its fifty-two churches and religious houses, together with its numerous streets and public buildings, beneath its raging waters.

With a sigh the young student turned from the contemplation of the melancholy wreck of ancient splendor, which the fallen city of the East Anglians presented even in the sixteenth century, when several churches and numerous vestiges of its former greatness still survived the storms of ages, and the assaults of the hungry waves; but what would he have thought had he seen it as it now is, reduced to a few

ruinous fishermen's huts, and of all its churches and religious houses, retaining only the roofless shell of one, in which divine service is no longer performed ! Doubtless he would have applied the words of the lamentation pronounced by the prophet over the desolation of Tyre : ' Is this your joyous city, whose antiquity is of ancient date ? Who hath taken this counsel against Tyre, the crowning city, whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honorable of the earth ? '

Young Wolsey had been too deeply engaged in the contemplation of these interesting localities to embrace the opportunity of displaying his own learning to the friendly monks, who had treated him with the respect which his natural talents and early acquirements were well calculated to inspire, and pressingly invited him to sojourn with them during the rest of the evening, and pass the night in their dormitory ; but the importunities of Humphrey (who, with Peter and Miles, had arrived while he was at vespers, and having refreshed themselves and the black nag, were now clamorous to proceed) prevailing over his desire of accepting an invitation so agreeable to his own inclinations, he took a loving farewell of the hospitable fraternity, promising to find some way of gratifying his wish of passing a few hours with them on his return. Then mounting the grey mare, he rode for-

ward at a gentle pace with his weary and somewhat malcontent companions, who scrupled not to reproach him for the want of good fellowship he had displayed in deserting their company. Nor did Humphrey fail to exert the privilege of an old and trusted servant, by rating his young master soundly for having overheated the grey mare on a long journey, besides incurring much peril of accidents both to himself and that valuable animal, on account of his being an inexperienced rider, and quite unacquainted with the road. The young student, who was of course rather impatient of these rebukes, which he considered very derogatory to the dignity of a bachelor of Oxford to receive from butchers and cattle drovers, endeavored to escape from them by a repetition of his offence, namely, outriding the party ; but that was no longer in his power, for he had fairly knocked up the grey mare so that she was unable to compete with the shaggy nag on which Humphrey rode, and the only alternative left him was to listen meekly, or to turn a deaf ear, to the reproaches that assailed him right and left, and amuse himself with his own reflections, or in contemplating the charms of the varied landscape before him, when, on ascending the gentle hill leading from Blitheburgh, he found himself among the rich woods and cowslipped meads of Henham, whose castellated hall, then the residence of the Brandons, rose in all

its gothic grandeur over grove and vale, as the crowning object of the prospect, but was soon after hidden behind the intervening screen of deep embowering shades, which were then almost impervious to the light of day, and converted the advancing gloom of evening into early night. No sooner was the party involved in this obscurity, than the offended trio, Humphrey, Miles, and Peter, united their voices in a universal chorus of grumbling at their detention at Blitheburgh, declaring they were benighted, and should in all probability be robbed of the sum entrusted to them for the purchase of the cattle.

The welcome sound of the curfew bell of St. Peter's, Wangford, however, soon informed them that their apprehensions were groundless, and put them into better humor, by advertising them that they were not more than a mile distant from the place of their destination ; and presently, after emerging from beneath the sombre shadows of Henham's oaken glades, they found themselves once more in daylight, and in the immediate vicinity of the pretty village of Wangford, which, with its picturesque monastery and chapel of St. Peters, crowning a gentle eminence, lay full before them.

The pastoral rivulet of the Wang, from which the name of this hamlet is derived, was soon forded by the weary travellers, who, proceeding to the little con-

vent, obtained without difficulty food and shelter for the night. The next morning, as soon as matins were over; which service they of course considered themselves bound to attend, they set forward on their short journey to the neighboring monastery of Reydon, which, as I said before, was a detached branch of the cell of St. Peter's, both dependencies on the monastery of Thetford.

Leaving its green bowery labyrinth of sylvan lanes, its antique hall and park, its aboriginal forest and the grey spire of its venerable church, and all that was pleasing and attractive in the landscape of the Reydon, or the red hill (which its Saxon name signifies), to the left, Humphrey guided the party through a narrow, wet, and incommodious road, to a mean conventional building, situated at the most desolate extremity of the parish, among the salt marshes.

If Wolsey had expected to find learning, piety, or hospitality among this fraternity, he was certainly much disappointed; for a set of more illiterate and narrow-minded men, than these Reydon monks, were never congregated together. Far from expressing the least interest in the acquirements of their accomplished young guest, they received the intelligence of his proficiency in the learned languages with dismay, and appeared far better pleased with the conversation of Humphrey, Peter, and Miles, which indeed was more

in unison with their tastes than that of the scholastic Wolsey, whom they entertained with long dissertations, not on the fathers or the classics, but on the most profitable breeds of cattle, and the most approved mode of fatting swine, in all which matters they were very fluent, and appeared to consider it passing strange that a butcher's son possessed so little knowledge on such interesting topics. They also discussed the best methods of curing white bacon, as the fat of pickled pork is called in that part of Suffolk. On this delectable article Wolsey and his party had the felicity of supping that evening, which he afterwards declared was the dullest he ever spent in the whole course of his life.

The next morning, though the bells chimed for matins, the monks made no movement to enter the chapel, as THEIR matin service was confined to that ceremony; and when Wolsey expressed his surprise at such unorthodox neglect of the prescribed offices of holy church, they replied 'that it was neither a sabbath nor a festival, and their swine must be attended to.'

When this interesting duty had been zealously performed by the fraternity, they proceeded with their guests to the marshes where their cattle fed, where a long and animated discussion took place between Humphrey and the superior of the convent respecting

the price, the merits, and defects of the beasts which Humphrey deemed most worthy of his attention, in which so much time was wasted that the dinner bell rang before they had settled the price of so much as one bullock.

At this meal they were again regaled with white bacon, which appeared a standing dish in this convent, for it was produced at supper, breakfast, and dinner ; at the latter, indeed, there was the addition of a huge dish of hard dumplings, with which they devoured a quantity of pork-dripping by way of sauce.

The morning had been fine but showery, in the afternoon a heavy rain set in, which rendered it impossible either to visit the cattle-marshes again, or to proceed homewards, which young Wolsey recommended his father's men to do, on the conviction of the impossibility of ever concluding a bargain with these frocked and cowled dealers in cattle and swine.

The rain, however, continued without intermission, and the malcontent student was compelled to remain where he was till the 'plague of water,' as he called this unwelcome downpouring, should abate.

How to pass the weary interval with men whose minds and manners were so dissimilar to his own, he knew not. Books they had never a one except their breviaries, and their acquaintance with these was a doubtful matter to the young student, since no per-

suasions of his could induce them to perform vespers when the bells chimed for that service, although it was a wet afternoon on which nothing else could be done.

Whether to attribute this to their utter disrelish to any thing of a spiritual nature, or to their fear of betraying their ignorance of latin and other deficencies to one whom they feared would detect their blunders, and perhaps report them to their superior at Thetford, Wolsey knew not, but he was so heartily weary of his sojourn among them, that nothing but the most pathetic remonstrances and earnest protestations on the part of Humphrey against such a measure, prevented him from retracing his steps to Blitheburgh, in spite of the rain, and remaining with the monks of Holy-Rood Chapel till his father's people had transacted their business with the conventional graziers of Reydon.

The following morning proving fine, they again proceeded to the marshes in the hope of striking a bargain, which was at length concluded; but not till after a delay that appeared to the impatient Wolsey almost interminable, which time he employed, not in listening to the altercations of the buyer and sellers of the bullocks; but in strolling through the marshes and making observations, till he obtained a view of

Blitheburgh on the line of country that intervened, across which, he persuaded himself a much shorter cut to that village might be made than by following the usual road through Wangford. Just as he had come to the resolution of attempting that route, the convent bell rang for dinner, and summoned him to a sixth meal of white bacon, of which the monks ate with as keen an appetite as if it had been the first time they ever partook of that savory fare, of which Wolsey was by this time almost as weary as of the company of the founders of the entertainment.

The bullocks, twelve in number, were now driven into the convent yard, and Humphrey called upon his young master to pay down the price for which he and the monks had agreed, at the average sum of one pound ten shillings a head, which he pronounced an unconscionable sum with a sly wink of intelligence at the Oxford student, by which he gave the youth, who was about to take his words literally, to understand that he was well satisfied with the bargain. In fact, the Reydon monks, shrewd and exacting as they were, had met with more than their match in the calculating, experienced Humphrey, who, without making a boast of his wisdom in this way, knew how to judge of the weight of a living ox almost to an odd pound. Till the business was concluded, the money paid, and the receipt given, he had forborne to taste of

the convent mead or ale, though both had been pressed upon him with an earnestness passing the bounds either of politeness or hospitality by the cunning monks, who hoped to overcome Humphrey's cool clear judgment and caution, by means of the merry brown bowl; but now fear of being overreached in his bargain in consequence of such an indulgence was at an end, Humphrey, malgre all his young master's expostulations, demanded the lately-rejected beverage, of which he, with Miles and Peter, drank pretty freely, though not perhaps so much as they would have done had the cloistered cattle-dealers been willing to produce more, which they were always sparing in doing after a bargain had been definitively struck.

The draughts which the trio had swallowed had however the effect of putting them all into such high good humor, that when Wolsey on mounting proposed to them his plan of changing the roundabout route through Wangford, for a straight cut across the marshes to Blitheburgh, they offered no objection, for even the prudent Humphrey was desirous of adopting any expedient by which they might make up for the time they had lost in drinking the convent ale after the business was transacted.

The monks assured them the project was feasible, since the branch of the Blithe which separated Henham and Reydon was fordable, and they would save

a considerable distance by crossing the river, but their hospitality did not extend to the civility of sending one of their swine-herds or goose-boys to point out the precise spot at which the attempt might be made without danger to passengers. The stream was much swollen in consequence of the late heavy rains; Humphrey and the drovers paused on the rushy bank, each prudently declining to be the first to try the ford. Wolsey, who was piqued at their doubts of his assurance ‘that it was safe! perfectly safe!’ though he would rather have had one of the others show a demonstrable proof that there was no danger, urged his reluctant mare forward.

‘Hold, master Thomas, hold! for the love of St. Margaret of Rissmere,’ cried Humphrey, who was suddenly sobered by the sight of his young master’s peril, and the recollection that the stream was deep and muddy.

Now this St. Margaret of Rissmere was a saint for whom Wolsey had neither love nor reverence, for she was the patroness of the unlearned monks of Reydon: so, without heeding the adjuration so pathetically addressed to him in her name, he boldly plunged into the dark and swollen waters of the dangerous ford. He was, as we have seen, an inexperienced rider on dry land, but a more skilful horseman than the stripling-student would have found it a diffi-

cult matter to retain his seat and guide the terrified animal, who presently lost her footing, and began to plunge and kick in the muddy slippery ooze, of which the bed of the Blithe and its dependent streams are composed, and which having recently been violently disturbed by the heavy rains, was in a state of complete ferment and liquefaction.

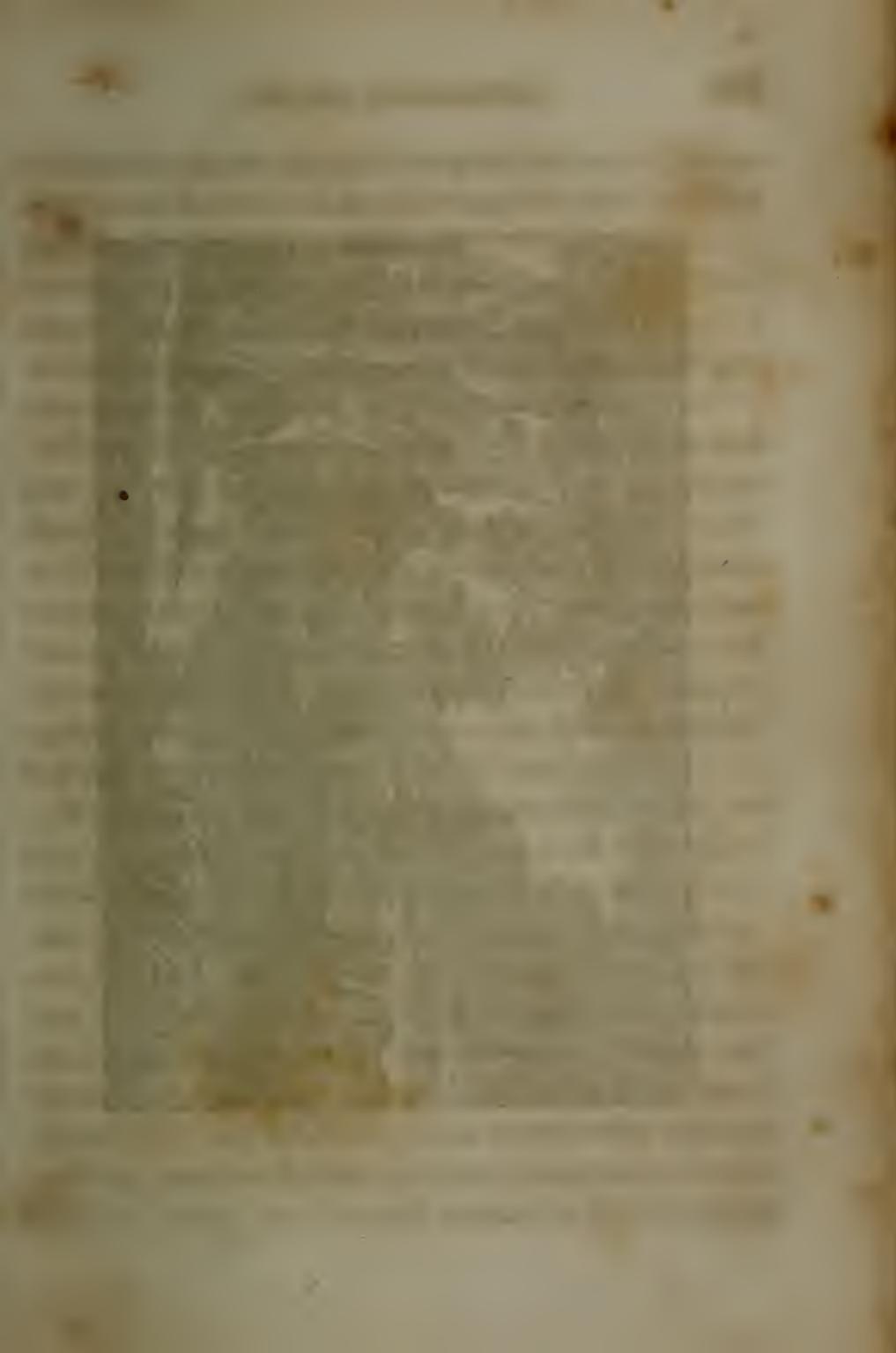
Wolsey, though encumbered with his bachelor's gown, which he had not this time taken the precautionary measure of tucking up and fastening to his girdle, courageously maintained his seat till the mare, exhausted with her violent efforts, sunk, and left him floating on the stream. He was an expert swimmer in the clear calm Orwell, or the pastoral Gipping, his native streams, but scarcely a fish that had been used to the fresh sparkling element of such rivers as these, could have steered its course in the dark vortex of brackish mud in which poor Wolsey was immersed.

Peter and Miles stood aghast at the accident, uttering doleful cries for help, without venturing to make a single effort to save the almost exhausted youth. Humphrey, the faithful Humphrey, at the first alarm had dismounted from the nag, and was preparing to plunge into the stream to save his master's son or perish in the attempt, when one of sir Richard Brandon's wood-rangers, who had seen the accident and hastened to the spot, reached the end of the long pole

he had been using in leaping the marsh ditches to the youth, by which assistance, the stream being narrow at that place, he was enabled, though not without some difficulty, to gain the opposite bank, from which, as soon as he had cleared his eyes and mouth of the salt, bitter, and unsavory ooze he had been compelled to swallow, he called out in an accent of distress to Humphrey, 'O ! Humphrey, Humphrey ! what shall we say to my father about the grey mare ?'

' St. Margaret of Rissmere take the mare ! ' sobbed Humphrey who appeared to consider the patroness of Reydon as somehow chargeable with their mishap : ' don't talk of her, my dear boy, when she had nearly been the death of you. Howsomdever, master Thomas, you must never undertake to lead those who are wiser than yourself short cuts any more. I hope you have had enough of this precious ford, that was to take you such a near way to Blitheburgh.'

' Why so it will, you simple fellow,' said Wolsey laughing, and wiping the mud from his face ; ' do not you see the beautiful church over those marshes, almost at my elbow ? I shall bestir myself to get there as fast as I can, now I *am* over the water, that I may get dry clothes, a good supper, and some pleasant chat with the worthy monks of the Holy Rood, which will console me for the drenching I have got.'





‘Alack, alack! master Thomas! what is to become of us and the bullocks?’ howled Miles and Peter from the opposite bank.

‘You may come over the river to me, an you like,’ responded Wolsey from the other side.

‘We durst not do that for our lives,’ cried the trembling drovers.

‘Then turn yourselves and the bullocks about, and find the road to Wangford as well as ye can: Humphrey knows the country, and he will guide ye to get to Blitheburgh by that roundabout way, ye poltroons, unless ye choose to stay where ye are till I am a Cardinal, when it is my intention to build a bridge over this sweet stream, to prevent other travellers from incurring the peril which I have done in endeavoring to ford such a bottomless abyss of mud.’

We will not follow the young bachelor to Blitheburgh, where doubtless he met with agreeable entertainment, nor will the limits of our tale admit of our tracing the progressive steps by which he in the sequel attained to the eminence to which his ambition, even in childhood, prompted him to aspire. By keeping his attention constantly fixed on this object, he found it at last within his reach; but was he then contented? Let me answer this query with another —When was the desire of human greatness ever satisfied? I refer the juvenile reader to the historical

summary for further particulars of the career of this extraordinary man, who, when he had attained to the coveted rank of Cardinal, though he was burdened with the cares of the prime minister of England, which office he held during twenty years of Henry the Eighth's reign, was not forgetful of his promise of building a bridge over the stream which had so nearly proved fatal to himself. The name of the bridge, and the local tradition thereunto belonging, will long, I trust, exist to preserve the memory of an action of pure benevolence to future ages.

THE

JUDGMENT OF SIR THOMAS MOORE.

IN the pleasant fields of Battersea, near the river side, on a spot which is now covered with houses, dwelt, three hundred and ten years ago, the blind widow, Annice Collie, and her orphan grandchild, Dorothy. These two were alone in the world, and yet they might scarcely be said to feel their loneliness ; for they were all the world to each other.

Annice Collie had seen better days ; for she was the daughter of a substantial yeoman, and her husband, Reuben Collie, had been a gardener in the service of good queen Catharine, the first wife of king Henry the eighth ; and Annice had been a happy wife, a joyful mother, and a liberal housekeeper, having wherewithal to bestow on the wayfarer and stranger at their need. It was, however, the will of God that these blessings should be taken from her. The queen fell into adversity, and, being removed from her favorite palace at Greenwich, to give place to her newly exalted rival, Anne Boleyn, her faithful ser-

vants were all discharged ; and, among them, Reuben Collie and his son Arthur, were deprived of their situations in the royal gardens.

This misfortune, though heavy, appeared light, in comparison with the bitter reverses that had befallen their royal mistress ; for the means of obtaining an honest livelihood were still in the power of the industrious little family ; and beyond that their ambition extended not.

Reuben Collie, who had spent his youth in the Low Countries, had acquired a very considerable knowledge of the art of horticulture, an art at that time so little practised in England, that the salads and vegetables with which the tables of the great were supplied, were all brought, at a great expense, from Holland, and were, of course, never eaten in perfection. Reuben Collie however, whose observations on the soil and climate had convinced him that these costly exotics might be raised in England, procured seeds, of various kinds, from a friend of his in the service of the Duke of Cleves, and was so fortunate as to rear a few plants of cabbages, savoys, brocoli, lettuces, artichokes, and cucumbers, to the unspeakable surprise of all the gardeners in London and its environs ; and honest Reuben narrowly escaped being arraigned as a wizard, in consequence of their envy at the success of his experiment. He had hired a cottage with a small field

adjoining, and this he and his son Arthur had, with great care and toil, converted into a garden and nursery ground, for rearing fruit-trees, vegetables, costly flowers, and herbs of grace ; and this spot he flattered himself would, one day, prove a mine of wealth to himself, and his son after him. That golden season never arrived ; for Arthur, who had, during a leisure time, obtained work in a nobleman's garden at Chelsea, for the sake of bringing home a few additional groats to assist in the maintenance of his wife Margaret, and his little daughter Dorothy, who lived with the old people, was unfortunately killed by the fall of an old wall, over which he was training a fig-tree.

The news of this terrible catastrophe was a death-blow to Reuben Collie. The afflicted mother and wife of Arthur struggled with their own grief to offer consolation to him ; but it was in vain, for he never smiled again. He no longer took any interest in the garden, which had been before so great a source of pleasure to him ; he suffered the weeds to grow up in his borders, and the brambles to take root in his beds. His flowers bloomed unheeded by him, and his fruit-trees remained unpruned : even his darling exotics, the very pride of his heart and the delight of his eyes, whose progress he had heretofore watched with an affection that almost savored of idolatry, were neglected ; and, resisting all the efforts which his wife and

daughter-in-law could make to rouse him from this sinful state of despair, he fell into a languishing disorder, and died a few months after the calamity that had rendered him childless.

And now the two widows, Annice and Margaret Collie had no one to work for them or render them any comfort in their bereavement, save the little Dorothy ; nevertheless, they did not abandon themselves to the fruitless indulgence of grief as poor Reuben had done ; but, the day after they had with tearful eyes assisted at his humble obsequies, they returned to their accustomed occupations, or rather they commenced a course of unwonted labor in the neglected garden, setting little Dorothy to weed the walks and borders, while they prepared the beds to receive crops, or transplanted the early seedlings from the frames. And Dorothy, though so young, was dutifully and industriously disposed, and a great comfort to them both ; it was her especial business to gather the strawberries and currants, and to cull the flowers for posies, and carry them out to sell daily ; nor was she afraid to venture, even to the great City of London, on such errands, though her only companion and guard was a beautiful Spanish dog called Constant, which had been given to her, when quite a little puppy, by her royal mistress, good queen Catharine, who was wont to bestow much notice on the child ; and she, in her turn,

fondly cherished the dog for the sake of her former benefactress. But Constant was, for his own sake, very deserving of her regard, not only for his extraordinary sagacity and beauty, but for the faithful and courageous attachment which he manifested for her person, no one daring to attack or molest her while he was at her side. Constant was moreover very useful in carrying her basket of posies for her, while she was loaded on either arm with those which contained the fruit; and so they performed their daily peregrinations, with kindly words on the one part, and looks and gestures of mutely eloquent affection on the other. Very fond and faithful friends were this guileless pair; and they were soon so well known, and excited so much interest, in the environs of London, that they were treated and caressed at almost every gentleman's house on the road: and the little girl found no difficulty in disposing of her fruit and flowers, and was as happy as a cheerful performance of her duties could render her. But these pleasant days did not last; the small-pox broke out in the neighbourhood:—Dorothy's mother was attacked with this fatal malady, and, after a few days' severe illness, died; and the very night after the melancholy and hurried funeral of her beloved daughter-in-law took place, Annice Collie was laid upon the bed of sickness with

the same cruel disease, and Dorothy was roused from the indulgence of the intense sorrow into which she was plunged by the unexpected death of her last surviving parent, to exert all her energies for the succour of her aged and helpless grandmother. ‘I know not how it was that I was enabled to watch, day and night, beside her bed, without sleep and almost without sustenance,’ would the weeping orphan say, whenever she referred to that sad period; ‘but of this I am assured, that the Lord, who feedeth the young ravens when they cry unto him, had compassion upon us both, or I never could have been supported, at my tender years, through trials like those. ‘In the multitude of sorrows that I had in my heart, His comforts refreshed my soul;’ and it was through His mercy that my dear grandmother recovered: but she never beheld the light of day again, the cruel disease had destroyed her sight.’ Yes, in addition to all her other afflictions, Annice Collie was now blind, a widow, childless and destitute; yet was repining far from her; and raising her sightless orbs to heaven, when she was informed by the sorrowful Dorothy of the extent of the calamity that had befallen her, in the loss of her daughter-in-law, she meekly said, with pious Eli, ‘It is the Lord, and shall I complain or fret myself because he hath, in his wisdom, resumed that, which, in his bounty, he gave? Blessed be his holy

name for all which he hath given, and for all that he hath taken away ; though these eyes shall behold his glorious works no more, yet shall my lips continue to praise Him who can bring light out of darkness.'

But the illness of herself and her deceased daughter-in-law had consumed the little reserve that poor Annice had made for the payment of their rent ; and their landlord, a hard and covetous man, who had ever since the death of Reuben Collie cast a greedy eye on the garden, which he and his son had made and planted with such labor and cost, called upon the poor widow on the quarter-day, and told her, with many harsh words, that unless she resigned the lease of the garden to him, he would distrain her goods for the rent she owed him, and turn her and her granddaughter into the street.

' It is hard to resign the lease of the garden, which has not yet remunerated us for the sum my poor husband laid out upon it, just as it is becoming productive ; but I am in your debt, Master Barker, so you must deal with me according to your conscience,' said the blind widow ; on which he took the garden into his own hands and made a merit of leaving the two forlorn ones in possession of the cottage.

And now Dorothy betook herself to spinning, for the maintenance of herself and her helpless relative ; but it was not much that she could earn in that way,

after having been accustomed to active employment in the open air: and then her grandmother fell sick again of a rheumatic fever, and Dorothy was compelled to sell first one piece of furniture then another to purchase necessaries for her, till at length nothing was left but the bed on which poor Annice lay; and when Dorothy looked round the desolate apartment that had formerly been so neat and comfortable, she was she was almost tempted to rejoice that her grandmother could not behold its present dreary aspect.

Winter again approached with more than ordinary severity: quarter day came and found the luckless pair unprovided with money to pay the rent; and their cruel landlord turned the blind widow and her orphan grandchild into the street: and, but for the benevolence of a poor laundress, who out of pity admitted them into her wretched hovel by the way-side, they would have had no shelter from the inclemency of the night that followed. Annice, helpless as an infant, sunk down upon the straw, whereon her compassionate neighbor had assisted in placing her, and having feebly expressed her thanks, turned her face to the wall; for she could not bear that her son's orphan should see the tears which she vainly strove to repress; but she could not hide them from the anxious scrutiny of the weeping girl. Dorothy did not speak, but looked very earnestly on the pale cheek and sun-

ken features of her venerable grandmother, while she appeared to hold communion with her own heart on some subject of painful interest. At length she rose up with the air of one who has effected a mighty conquest, and exclaimed, ‘ Yes, dearest grandmother, it shall be done: the sacrifice shall be made ! ’

‘ What shall be done, my child ? ’ inquired Annice in surprise: ‘ I have asked nothing of you. ’

‘ Not indeed with your lips, dear parent of my departed father,’ said Dorothy; ‘ but your pallid cheek and tearful eyes have demanded a sacrifice of me, which, however dearly it cost me, shall be made—I will sell Constant. ’

‘ Sell Constant ! ’ echoed her grandmother; ‘ can you part with the gift of your royal mistress ? ’

‘ Not willingly, believe me,’ said Dorothy, throwing her arms about the neck of her mute favorite, and bursting into a flood of tears; ‘ but how can I see you want bread ? It is not long since that I was offered an angel of gold for him by a servant of the Duchess of Suffolk; and this I selfishly refused at that time, saying I would rathor starve than part with my dog. Alas, poor fellow ! though I have shared my scanty-pittance with him, since your illness he has suffered much for want of food; famine hath touched us all ;

and I have reason to reproach myself for having retained a creature I can no longer maintain.'

The next morning she rose at an early hour, and, accompanied by her faithful Constant, took the road to Westminster, to inquire if the Duchess of Suffolk were still disposed to purchase him at the price she had named ; but she returned, bathed in tears, and in great distress, having encountered two russians, in a lonely part of the road at Knightsbridge, one of whom claimed Constant as his property, violently seized upon him, and, in spite of her tears and remonstrances, carried him off, threatening her with very harsh usage if she attempted to follow.

Poor Dorothy ! this appeared the severest trial that had yet befallen her ; at any rate it was one of those drops of bitterness which make a brimful cup of misery overflow ; and, regardless of the soothings or ex postulations of her grandmother, she wept and sobbed all that night, refusing to be comforted. She rose the following morning with the melancholy conviction that no resource now remained but the wretched one of supplicating the alms of the charitably disposed in the streets and highways. Nothing but the imperative urgency of the case could have reconciled the meek and timid Dorothy to a mode of life so every way repugnant to her feelings. ' We wept when we saw my dear mother laid in the cold and silent grave ;

but now I rejoice that she was spared the grief of seeing this day,' said the sorrowful orphan, when she commenced her unwonted vocation, and experienced the bitter taunts of the pampered menials of the great, the rude repulses of the unfeeling, or the grave rebukes of the stern, but well-meaning moralists who, though they awarded their charity, accompanied their alms with reflections on the disreputable and lazy trade she had adopted. Some there were indeed, who, touched with the sweetness and modesty of her manners and appearance, spake the forlorn one kindly, relieved her present wants, and bade her call again; but the number of these was comparatively small: and the bread which she earned so hardly for herself and her aged relative was, literally speaking, steeped in her tears. While pursuing her miserable occupation, she sadly missed the company and caresses of the faithful Constant. 'He would have been kind and affectionate,' she said, 'if all the world had frowned upon her. Her change of circumstances made no alteration in his regard; if she were in sickness or sorrow, and others chid or scorned her, he appeared to redouble his endearments; and, while he was by her side, she did not feel so very lonely—so sweet it is to be assured of the love of one friend, however humble.' Sometimes too she thought she

shonld feel less sorrowful if she were assured that he had fallen into good hands.

Meantime days and weeks passed away, her clothes grew old and her shoes were worn out, and Dorothy, who was accustomed to appear so neat and nice in her attire, was reduced to the garb of the most abject misery ; but though barefoot and sorely pinched with cold and famine, she thought less of her own sufferings than of the privations to which her blind grandmother was exposed.

One evening, when the snow lay deep upon the ground, and Dorothy had been begging all day without receiving a single penny in alms, neither had she tasted a morsel of food since a very early hour in the morning, her strength failed her ; and, overcome by cold, hunger, weariness, and sorrow, she sat down on a heap of frozen snow by the way-side, and wept bitterly. The river Thames was then frozen over ; she had walked across it on the ice, and was now in the parish of Chelsea. She regretted that she had ventured so far from her home, for she was oppressed with fatigue ; and, though she saw the trees and houses on the opposite shores of Battersea so near, she felt as if she could not reach them that night. A drowsy feeling, the fatal effects of cold and hunger combined, was stealing over her ; she tried to rouse herself, 'for,' she faintly whispered to hereslf, 'my

poor grandmother will be so uneasy, if I do not return : but then, she thought, ' how pleasantly I could go to sleep here, and forget all my troubles ! I am not cold now, only so very, very drowsy ; ' and, though aware that, if she did yield to these lethargic feelings, her sleep would be the sleep of death, she required some stimulus, more powerful than even that conviction, to dispel the soporific influence of the deadly cold which had seized her tender frame, like a withering blight, and benumbed her faculties. But at the very moment when the shores of Battersea, with their snow-clad trees and houses, were fading before her closing eyes, and she was sinking passively and almost pleasingly into that slumber from which she would never have awaked, she was roused by a dog bounding suddenly upon her with a joyful cry, and licking her benumbed face and hands with the most passionate demonstrations of affection.

' Ah, my dear, dear Constant ! is it you ? ' she exclaimed in an impulsive burst of delight at this unexpected rencontre. The icy bonds of the death-sleep that had enchain'd her were broken ; she returned the eager caresses of the faithful animal with the rapture of one who is suddenly restored to a long-lost friend ; and, starting from the ground with renewed strength and spirits, she exclaimed, ' I shall be able to

reach home now I have found you, my pretty Constant, my own dear dog !'

' Your dog, hussey ? ' interposed a serving-man, rudely separating the reunited friends, ' I'd have you know that this dog belongs to my Lady More, whose footman I have the honor to be.'

' Indeed, indeed, it is my dog that was stolen from me, on the Knightsbridge-road, by a hard-hearted man,' sobbed Dorothy ; she was going to add, ' just such a one as yourself,' but she stopped short.

' And pray, my sweet mistress, may I ask how a beggar-wench, like yourself, came in possession of a dog of such a rare and costly breed ? ' demanded the man with a sneer.

' He was given to me, when quite a puppy, by my sovereign lady, good queen Catharine, who was ever gracious unto me,' said she.

' Ho ! ho ! ho ! was she so ? ' responded the man, bursting into an insulting laugh ; ' a likely tale, forsooth ! you look like a queen's minion, my mistress, do you not ? Well, well, it is not a small lie that will choke you ! Good night, my fair courtier, 'tis too cold to stand parleying with you on the matter.' So saying, he laid violent hands on Constant ; and, in spite of his resistance and Dorothy's tears and passionate remonstrances, he tucked him under his arm, and trudged off.

Cold, hunger, weariness, and dejection, were alike forgotten by the bereaved mistress of Constant at the prospect of a second separation from this faithful friend, whose affecting remembrance of her, after so long an absence, had endeared him to her more than ever ; and, without a moment's hesitation, she followed the servant as quickly as her naked and lacerated feet could carry her over the frozen snow, till he arrived at the gates of sir Thomas More's mansion, which she essayed to enter with him.

‘ Why, you saucy young jade ! ’ exclaimed he, thrusting her back ; ‘ this is a pass of impudence beyond any thing I ever heard of ! Don’t you know that I am my lady More’s own footman, and sir Thomas More, my lady’s husband, is the lord high Chancellor of England ? ’

‘ I pray you then to bring me to the speech of her ladyship,’ said Dorothy, ‘ for the higher she be, the more will it behove her to do me justice.’

On this the serving-man, who was aware that his lady was a proud worldly woman, and by no means likely to resign her favorite dog to a beggar-girl, laughed immoderately. Some of his fellow servants who were standing by, joined in his mirth, while others were so cruel as to address many jeering remarks to Dorothy on her dress and appearance, all which she heard patiently, and meekly replied, ‘ the fashion

of her clothes was not of her choice, but her necessity, to which she prayed that none of those who reviled her might ever be exposed: ' and, when none would undertake to bring her to the speech of lady More, she seated herself on a stone at the gates of the court yard, to wait for the appearance of some of the family, though she was exposed to the inclemency of the snow-storm, which beat on the uncovered head of the friendless orphan.

At length she heard the sound of wheels, and the servants came hastily to throw open the gates, crying, ' Room, room, for my lord chancellor's coach ; ' and all the daughters of sir Thomas More, with their husbands and children, came forth to welcome him, as was their custom ; for that great and good man was very tenderly beloved of his family, to every member of which he was most fondly attached ; yet, when he saw the half-naked child sitting so sorrowfully at his gate, he looked reproachfully on them all, and said, ' How now, have ye all learned the parable of Lazarus and Dives to so little purpose, that ye suffer this forlorn one to remain without the gates in such an evening that no christian would turn a dog from the fire ? '

‘ Noble sir,’ said Dorothy, making a lowly reverence to sir Thomas, ‘ none of this good family wist of my distress. nor have I applied to them for an alms

the cause of my making bold to come hither was upon another matter, on which I beseech your worshipful lordship to do me justice.'

'Well, my little maiden, it is cold deciding on causes here,' said sir Thomas: 'so thou shalt step into my kitchen with the servants; and, after thou art fed and warmed, I will hear thee on thy matter.'

Now, though the words 'fed and warmed,' sounded pleasantly enough in the ears of the cold, half-famished child, yet her attachment to her dog prevailed over every other consideration, and she said, 'Alack, noble sir! though I stand greatly in need of your hospitable charity. yet it would be more satisfaction to me if you would be pleased to hear me forthwith on the matter of my dog, which is detained from me by one of my lady More's serving-men, under the false pretence that it belongeth to her ladyship.'

'Go to, thou saucy vagrant! hast thou the boldness to claim my favorite dog before my face?' exclaimed a very sour-spoken and hard-favored old gentlewoman, whom Dorothy had not before observed.

'Craving your honorable ladyship's pardon,' replied Dorothy curtseying, 'I do not claim your ladyship's dog, for that woud be a sin; but I demand my own to be restored to me, in which I hope I wrong no one, seeing he is mine own lawful property, which

a false caitiff took violently from me three months ago.'

'That agreeth well with the time when your dog Sultan was presented to you, Mistress Alice,' observed sir Thomas, significantly.

'Tilley-valley! tilley-valley!' ejaculated lady More in a pet; 'that is ever the way in which you cross me, sir Thomas, making out withal as though I were a receiver of stolen goods.'

'Nay, patience, my lady; I went not so far as to decide the cause before I had heard both sides of the question, which it is my purpose to do without farther delay,' returned sir Thomas, smiling: 'so follow me into court, both plaintiff and defendant, and I will give judgment between the parties before I sup; ' and, with a merry air, he led the way into the servants' hall, where, placing himself in the housekeeper's chair, and putting on his cap, he said, 'Beggar versus My lady; open the pleadings, and speak boldly.'

But poor Dorothy, instead of speaking, hung down her head, and burst into tears.

'How! speechless!' said sir Thomas: 'then must the court appoint counsel for the plaintiff. Daughter Margaret, do you closet the plaintiff, hear her case, and plead for her.'

Then mistress Margaret Roper, sir Thomas's eldest daughter, with a benevolent smile, took the a-

bashed, trembling girl aside ; and having with soothing words, drawn the particulars of her melancholy story from her, she advanced to the front of sir Thomas's chair, leading the weeping orphan by the hand, and attempted to humor the scene by opening her client's case in a witty imitation of legal terms, after the manner of a grave law-serjeant ; but, as she proceeded to detail the circumstances under which the dog was lost, recognised, and again taken from the friendless orphan, she, by imperceptible degrees, changed her style to the simply pathetic terms in which the child had related the tale to her—the language—the unadorned language of truth and feeling, which never fails to come home to every bosom. All present, save my lady More, who preserved a very *aigre* and impenetrable demeanor, were dissolved in tears : as for the poor plaintiff, she covered her face with a part of her tattered garments, and sobbed aloud ; and the counsel herself was compelled to pause for a moment to overcome her own emotion, ere she could conclude her eloquent appeal on her client's behalf.

‘Thou hast pleaded well, my good Meg,’ said sir Thomas, smiling through his tears on his best beloved daughter ; ‘but now must we hear the defendant's reply, for the plaintiff ever appeareth in the right till after the defendant hath spoken : so now, my lady, what hast thou to say in this matter ?’

‘ My lady hath to repeat what she hath too often said before, that sir Thomas More’s jests are ever out of place,’ replied my lady in a huff.

‘ Nay, marry, good mistress Alice, an thou have nought better to the purpose to respond, I must be fain to give judgment for the plaintiff in this case.’

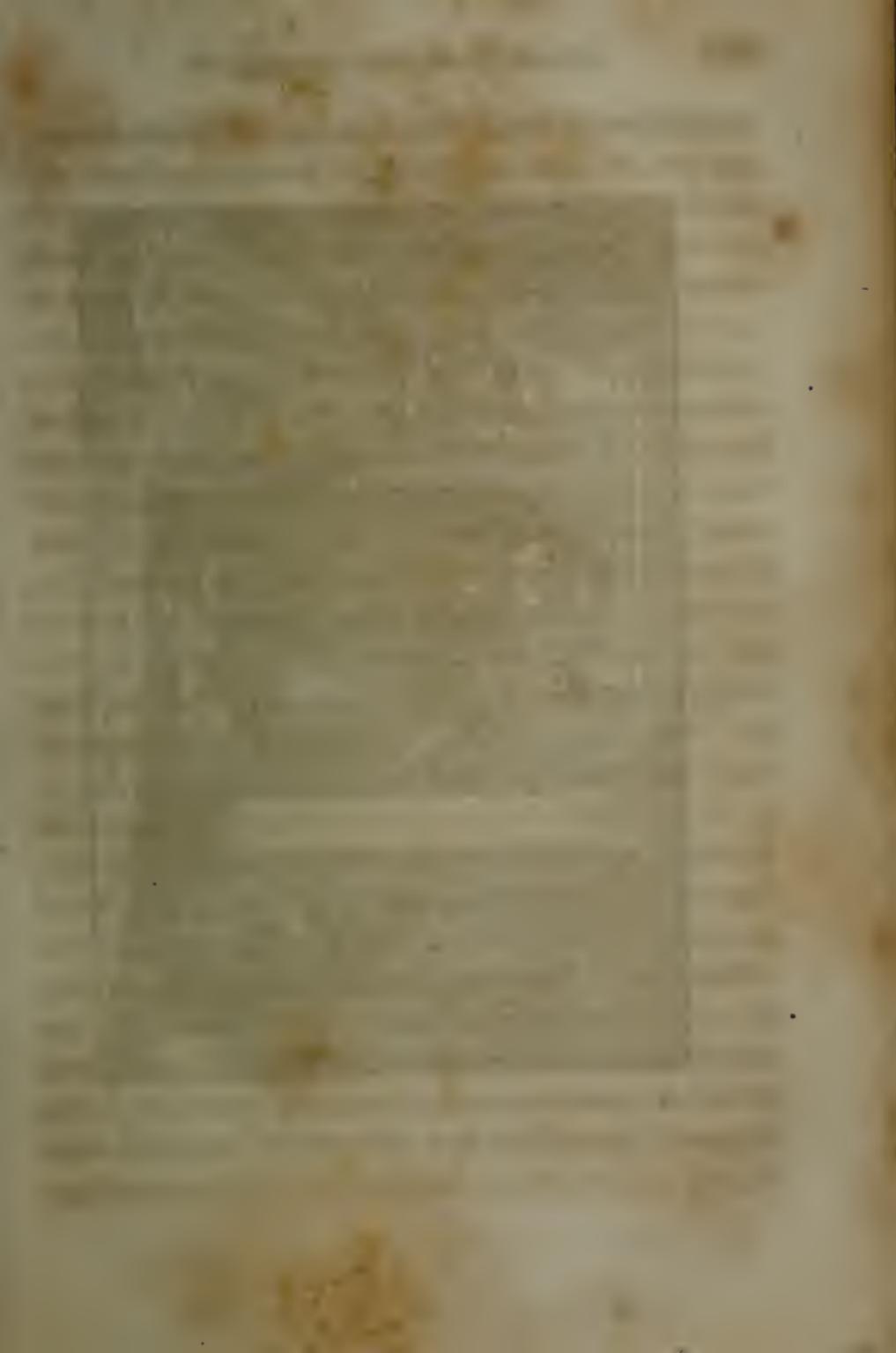
‘ Tilley-valley, sir Thomas ! thou art enough to provoke a saint with thy eternal quips and gibes,’ replied her ladyship : ‘ I tell you the dog is my property, and was presented to me by an honorable gentleman, one master Rich, whom you, sir Thomas, know well ; and he said he bought him of a dealer in such gear.’

‘ Which dealer probably stole him from my client,’ said mistress Margaret Roper.

‘ Nay, but, daughter Margaret, how knowest thou that Sultan was ever this wench’s property ?’ retorted lady More sharply.

‘ Well answered, defendant,’ said sir Thomas : ‘ we must call a witness whose evidence must decide that matter. Son Roper, bring the dog Sultan, alias Constant, into court.’

The eyes of Dorothy brightened at the sight of her old companion ; and sir Thomas More, taking him into his hands, said, ‘ Here now am I placed in as great a strait as ever was king Solomon, in respect to the memorable case in which he was called upon to decide whose was the living child, which both mothers





claimed, and to whom pertained the dead, which neither would acknowledge. This maiden saith, the dog which I hold is her's, and was violently taken from her three months agone: my lady replies, ' Nay, but he is mine, and was presented to me by an honorable man,' (one of the king's counsellors forsooth). Now, in this matter, the dog is wiser than my lord chancellor, for he knoweth unto whom he of right pertaineth; and, therefore, upon his witness must the decision of this controversy depend. So now, my lady, you stand at the upper end of the hall, as befits your quality, and you, my little maiden go to the lower; and each of you call the dog by the name which you have been wont to do: and to whichever of you twain he goeth, that person I adjudge to be his rightful owner.'

' Oh, my lord, I ask no other test ! ' exclaimed Dorothy joyfully.

' Sultan ! Sultan ! come to thy mistress, my pretty Sultan ! ' said my lady, in her most blandishing tone, accompanying her words with such actions of enticement as she judged most likely to win him over to her; but he paid not the slightest heed to the summons. Dorothy simply pronounced the word ' Constant ! ' and the dog bounding from between the hands of sir Thomas More, who had lightly held him till

both claimants had spoken, leaped upon her, and overwhelmed her with his passionate caresses.

‘It is a clear case,’ said sir Thomas: ‘the dog hath acknowledged his mistress, and his witness is incontrovertible. Constant, thou art worthy of thy name.’

‘Hark ye, wench!’ said my lady More, whose desire of retaining the object of dispute had increased with the prospect of losing him, ‘I will give thee a good price for thy dog, if thou art disposed to sell him.’

‘Sell my dear, beautiful, faithful Constant! O, never, never!’ exclaimed Dorothy, throwing her arms about her newly recovered favorite, and kissing him with the fondest affection.

‘I will give thee a golden angel, and a new suit of clothes to boot, for him, which, I should think, a beggar-girl were mad to refuse,’ pursued lady More.

‘Nay, nay, my lady, never tempt me with your gold,’ said Dorothy; ‘or my duty to my poor blind grandmother will compel me to close with your offer, though it should break my heart withal.’

‘Nay, child, an’ thou hast a blind old grandmother, whom thou lovest so well, I will add a warm blanket, and a linsey-woolsey gown for her wear, unto the price I have already named,’ said the persevering lady More:—‘speak shall I have him?’ pursued she, pressing the bargain home.

Dorothy averted her head, to conceal the large tears

that rolled down her pale cheeks, as she sobbed out,
'Ye—s, my lady.'

'Dear child,' said sir Thomas, 'thou hast made a noble sacrifice to thy duty: 'tis pity that thou hast taken up so bad a trade as begging, for thou art worthy of better things.'

'It is for my poor blind grandmother,' said the weeping Dorothy: 'I have no other means of getting bread for her.'

'I will find thee a better employment,' said sir Thomas, kindly: 'thou shalt be my daughter Roper's waiting-maid, if thou canst resolve to quit the wandering life of a beggar, and settle to an honest service.'

'How joyfully would I embrace your offer, noble sir, if I could do so without being separated from my aged grandmother, who has no one in the world but me,' replied Dorothy, looking up between smiles and tears.

'Nay, God forbid that I should put asunder those whom nature hath so fondly united in the holy bands of love and duty,' said sir Thomas More, wiping away a tear: 'my house is large enough to hold ye both; and while I have a roof to call mine own, it shall contain a corner for the blind and aged widow and the destitute orphan: that so, when the fashion of this world passeth away, they may witness for me before Him, with whom there is no respect of persons, and who judgeth every man according to his works.'

LADY LUCY'S PETITION TO THE QUEEN.

‘AND is my dear papa shut up in this dismal place to which you are taking me, nurse?’ asked the little lady Lucy Preston, raising her eyes fearfully to the Tower of London, as the coach in which she was seated with Amy Gradwell her nurse, drove under the gateway.

She trembled and hid her face in Amy’s cloak, when they alighted, and she saw the soldiers on guard with their crossed partizans, before the portals of that part of the fortress where the prisoners of state were confined, and where her own father, lord Preston, of whom she was to come to take a last farewell, then lay, under sentence of death.

‘Yes, my dear child,’ returned Amy, mournfully, ‘my lord, your father, is indeed within these sad walls. You are now going to visit him. Shall you be afraid of entering the place, my dear?’

‘No,’ replied lady Lucy, resolutely, ‘I am not afraid of going to any place where my dear papa is.’

Yet she clung closer to the arm of her attendant, as they were admitted within the gloomy precincts of the building ; her little heart fluttered fearfully as she glanced round her, and she whispered to her nurse, ' Was it not here that the two young princes, Edward the fifth and his brother Richard duke of York, were murdered by their cruel uncle Richard, duke of Gloucester ? '

' Yes, my love, it was ; but do not be alarmed on that account, for no one will harm you,' said old Amy, in an encouraging tone.

' And was not good king Henry the sixth murdered here also, by that same wicked Richard ? ' continued the little girl, whose imagination was full of the records of the deeds of blood that had been perpetrated in this fatally celebrated place, many of which had been related to her by Bridget Oldworth the house-keeper, since her father had been imprisoned in the Tower on a charge of high treason.

' But do you think they will murder father, nurse ? ' pursued the child, as they began to ascend the stairs leading to the apartment in which the unfortunate nobleman was confined.

' Hush ! hush ! dear child ; you must not talk of these things here,' said Amy, ' or they will shut us both up in a room with bars and bolts, instead of admitting us to see my lord your father.'

Lady Lucy pressed closer to her nurse's side, and was silent till they were ushered into the room where her father was confined, when, forgetting every thing else in her joy at seeing him again, she sprang into his arms, and almost stifled him with her kisses.

Lord Preston was greatly affected at the sight of his little daughter, and overcome by her passionate demonstrations of fondness and his own anguish at the thought of his approaching separation from her, and the idea of leaving her an orphan at her tender age (for she had only just completed her ninth year and had lost her mother), he clasped her to his bosom, and bedewed her innocent face with his tears.

‘Why do you cry, dear papa?’ asked the little girl, who was herself weeping at the sight of his distress. ‘And why will you not leave this gloomy place, and come home to your own hall again?’

‘Attend to me, Lucy, and I will tell you the cause of my grief,’ said her father, seating the little girl on his knee. ‘I shall never come home again, for I have been condemned to die for high treason (which means an offence against the king), and I shall not leave this place till they bring me forth on Tower Hill, where they will cut off my head with a sharp axe, and set it up afterwards over Temple Bar or London Bridge.’

At this terrible intelligence, Lady Lucy screamed

aloud, and hid her face in her father's bosom, which she wetted with her tears.

'Be composed, my dear child,' said Lord Preston, 'for I have much to say to you, and we may never meet again on this side the grave, since I am so soon to die.'

'No, no, dear father,' cried lady Lucy, 'they shall not kill you, for I will cling so fast about your neck, that they shall not be able to cut your head off; and I will tell them all how good and kind you are, and then they will not want to kill you.'

'My dearest love, this is all simple talking,' said lord Preston; 'I have offended against the law as it is at present established, by trying to have king James, my old master, restored to the throne, and therefore I must die. Do you remember, Lucy, I took you once to Whitehall, to see king James, and how kindly he spoke to you?'

'O yes, father! and I recollect he laid his hand upon my head, and said, I was like what his daughter, the princess of Orange, was at my age,' replied lady Lucy, with great animation.

'Well, my child, very shortly after you saw king James at Whitehall, the prince of Orange came over to England, and drove king James out of his palace and kingdom, and the people, who were displeased with king James on account of his professing the Ro-

man Catholic religion, which they suspected he designed to reestablish in this country, deposed him, and made the prince and princess of Orange king and queen in his stead.'

' But was it not very wicked of the princess of Orange to join with her husband to take her father's kingdom away from him ? I am very sorry king James thought me like her,' said lady Lucy earnestly.

' Hush, hush, my love ! you must not talk so of the princess of Orange ; for, perhaps, she considered she was doing right in depriving her father of his dominions, because it is against the law for a king of England to be a catholic. Yet, I confess, I did not believe she would have consented to sign the death-warrants of so many of her father's old servants, on account of their faithful attachment to him,' said lord Preston with a sigh.

' I have heard that the princess of Orange is of a merciful disposition,' said old Amy Gradwell, who had been a weeping spectator of the scene between the father and child ; ' and perhaps she might be induced to spare your life, my lord, if your pardon were very earnestly entreated of her by some of your friends.'

' Alas ! my good Amy, I have no one who will undertake the perilous office of soliciting the royal grace for an attainted traitor, lest they should be suspected

of forwarding the cause of king James,' said lord Preston mournfully.

' Dear father ! let me go to the queen, and entreat for your pardon,' cried lady Lucy, with a crimsoned cheek and sparkling eye. ' I will so beg and pray her to spare your life that she will not have the heart to deny me.'

' Simple child ! ' exclaimed her father ; ' what should you be able to say to the queen that would be of any avail ? '

' God would teach me what to say,' returned lady Lucy piously ; ' and he has also power to touch her heart with pity for a child's distress, and to open her ear to my earnest petition.'

Her father clasped her to his bosom, but said, ' Thou wouldest be afraid of speaking to the queen, even if thou shouldst be admitted to her presence, my Lucy.'

' Why should I be afraid of speaking to the queen, father ? for even if she should be angry with me, and answer harshly at first, I should be thinking too much of your peril to mind it. Or if she were to send me to the Tower, and cut off my head, she could only kill my body, you know ; but would have no power at all to hurt my soul, which is under the protection of One who is greater than any king or queen upon earth.'

‘ You are right, my child, to fear God, and to have no other fear,’ said her father. ‘ It is He who hath perhaps put it into your young heart to plead with the queen for my life, which if it be His pleasure that she should grant, I shall feel it indeed a happiness for my child to be made the instrument of my deliverance from the perils of death which now encompass me ; but if it should be otherwise, His will be done. He hath promised to be a Father to the fatherless, and he will not forsake my good and dutiful child when I am low in the dust.’

‘ But how will my lady Lucy gain admittance to the queen’s presence, my lord ? ’ asked old Amy.

‘ I will write a letter to her godmother, the lady Clarendon, requesting her to accomplish the matter,’ said lord Preston. He then wrote a few hasty lines to that lady, which, together with his own petition for the royal mercy, he gave to his little daughter, telling her she was to go the next day to Hampton Court, properly attended, and to obtain a sight of lady Clarendon, who was there in waiting upon the queen, and to deliver that letter to her with her own hand. He then kissed his child, tenderly blessed her, and bade her farewell.

Though the little girl wept much at parting with her father, she left the Tower with a far more composed mind than that with which she entered it, for

she had formed her resolution, and her young heart was full of hope. She had silently committed her cause to God, and she trusted that He would dispose the event prosperously for her.

The next morning, before the lark had sung her matins, lady Lucy was up and dressed in a suit of deep mourning, which Amy had provided, considering it the most suitable garb for a child whose only surviving parent was under sentence of death.

The servants, who had been informed of their young lady's intention to solicit the queen for her father's pardon, were all assembled in the entrance hall, to see her depart, and as she passed through them, leaning on her nurse's arm, and attended by her father's confidential secretary and the old butler, they shed tears, and bade God bless her and prosper her in her pious design.

Lady Lucy arrived at Hampton Court, and was introduced into the countess of Clarendon's apartment before her ladyship was out of bed; and having told her artless tale with great earnestness, delivered her father's letter.

Lady Clarendon, who was wife to the queen's uncle, received her young god-daughter very affectionately, but plainly told her, she must not reckon on her influence with the queen, because the earl of Clarendon was in disgrace on account of being suspected of

carrying on a correspondence with king James, his brother-in-law; therefore she dared not solicit the queen on behalf of her friend, lord Preston, against whom her majesty was so deeply exasperated that she had declared she would not show him any mercy.

‘O !’ said the little girl, ‘if I could only see the queen myself, I would not wish any one to speak for me, for I should plead so earnestly to her for my dear father’s life that she could not refuse me, I am sure.’

‘Poor child ! what could *you* say to the queen ?’ asked the countess compassionately.

‘Only let me see her, and *you* shall hear,’ said lady Lucy.

‘Well, my love, it were a pity but what thou shouldst have the opportunity,’ said lady Clarendon ; ‘but much I fear thy little heart will fail thee when thou seest the queen face to face, and thou wilt not be able to utter a syllable.’

‘God will inspire me with courage, and direct the words of my lips,’ said the little girl, with tears in her eyes.

The countess was impressed with the piety and filial tenderness of her young god-daughter, and she hastened to rise and dress, that she might, without further delay, conduct the child into the palace gallery, where the queen usually passed an hour in

walking, after her return from chapel, which she attended every morning.

Her majesty had not left the chapel when lady Clarendon and Lucy entered the gallery, and her ladyship endeavored to divert the anxious impatience of her little friend, by pointing out to her the portraits with which it was adorned.

‘I know that gentleman well,’ said the child, pointing to a noble whole-length portrait of James the second.

‘That is the portrait of the deposed king James, queen Mary’s father,’ observed the countess sighing, ‘and a very striking likeness it is of that unfortunate monarch;—but hark! here comes the queen, with her chamberlain and ladies, from chapel,—now Lucy is the time! I will step into the recess yonder; but you must remain alone standing where you are, and when her majesty approaches near enough, kneel down on one knee before her, and present your father’s petition. She, who walks a little in advance of the other ladies, is the queen. Be of good courage and address yourself to her.’

Lady Clarendon then made a hasty retreat. Lady Lucy’s heart fluttered violently when she found herself alone, but her resolution did not fail her; and while her lips moved silently in fervent prayer to the

Almighty for his assistance in this trying moment, she stood with folded hands, pale, but composed and motionless as a statue, awaiting the queen's approach ; and when her majesty drew near the spot, she advanced a step forward, knelt, and presented the petition.

The extreme beauty of the child, her deep mourning, the touching sadness of her look and manner, and above all, the fast flowing tears which bedewed her innocent face, excited the queen's attention and interest ; she paused, spoke kindly to her, and took the offered paper ; but when she saw the name of lord Preston, her color rose, she frowned, cast the petition from her, and would have passed on, but Lucy, who had watched her countenance with a degree of anxious interest that amounted to agony, losing all awe for royalty in her fears for her father's life, put forth her hand, and grasping the queen's robe, cried in an imploring tone, ' Spare my father,—my dear—dear father,—royal lady ! '

Lucy had meant to say many persuasive things, but she forgot them all in her sore distress, and could only repeat the words, ' Mercy, mercy for my father, gracious queen ! ' till her vehement emotion choked her voice, and throwing her arms round the queen's knees, she leaned her head against her majesty's person for support, while her rich profusion of flaxen

ringlets, which partly concealed her fair face, floated over the queen's dress ; she sobbed aloud in the uncontrollable anguish of her heart.

The intense sorrow of a child is always peculiarly touching ; but the circumstances under which Lucy appeared were more than commonly affecting.

It was a daughter not beyond the season of infancy, overcoming the timidity of that tender age, to become a suppliant of an offended sovereign for the life of a father.

Queen Mary pitied the distress of the young petitioner ; but as she considered the death of lord Preston a measure of political expediency, she told Lucy mildly, but firmly, that 'she could not grant her request.'

'And will you kill my dear father, who is so good and kind to every one ?' said Lucy, raising her blue eyes, which were swimming in tears, to the face of the queen.

'He may be so, my child,' returned her majesty ; 'but he has broken the laws of his country, and therefore he must die.'

'But you can pardon him if you choose to do so, madam,' replied Lucy ; 'and I have read that God is well pleased with those who forgive, for He has said, Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.'

'It does not become a little girl like you to attempt

to instruct me,' replied the queen gravely. 'I am acquainted with my duty, and as it is my place to administer justice impartially, it is not possible for me to pardon your father, however painful it may be for me to deny the request of so dutiful a child.'

Lucy did not reply, she only raised her streaming eyes, with an appealing look to the queen, and then turned them expressively on the portrait of king James, opposite to which her majesty was standing.

There was something in that look which bore no ordinary meaning, and the queen, whose curiosity was excited by the peculiar manner of the child, could not refrain from asking her, 'wherefore she gazed so earnestly on that picture ?'

'I was thinking,' replied lady Lucy, 'how strange it was that you should wish to kill my father, only because he loved yours so faithfully.'

This wise, but artless reproof, from the lips of infant innocence, went to the heart of the queen. She raised her eyes to the once dear and honored countenance of a parent, who, whatever were his political errors as a king, had ever been the tenderest of fathers to her; and when the remembrance that he was an exile in a foreign land, relying on the bounty of strangers for his daily bread, while she and her husband were invested with the regal inheritance of which he had been deprived, pressed upon her mind,

the thought of the contrast of her conduct as a daughter when compared with the filial piety of the child before her (whom a sentence of her's was about to render an orphan), smote her heart, and she burst into tears.

‘Rise, dear child,’ said she. ‘Thou hast prevailed—thy father shall not die. I grant his pardon at thy entreaty,—thy filial love has saved him.’

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

TO

GUTHRED ; OR, THE WIDOW'S SLAVE.

THOSE who have not examined the map of that part of Great Britain which formed the Anglo Saxon empire, will be astonished to find, how large and important a portion of this island was once designated by the name of Northumberland. Children cast their eyes on the map, and see our northernmost county, or the land lying between the Tyne and the Tweed, at present so called, and must necessarily form a very inadequate idea of the power of the Saxon Northumbrian king ; especially when they find from history that this sovereignty had two divisions, the north was called the kingdom of Bernicia, and the south that of Deira. It is requisite to explain, that the ancient North Humber Land literally meant all the land lying north of the river Humber ; and the possessions of the monarchs of this district comprised the whole of the great county of York, Durham, and not only the spot now corruptly called Northumberland, but Roxburghshire, Lothianshire, and the north-eastern counties of Scotland as far as the Frith of Forth, and as much further as the strong hand of violence could grasp and retain. Edinburgh, or Edwinsborough, was then a city and fortress belonging to the Saxons, founded by one of their chiefs.

A further examination of the map of Europe will show the youthful student how conveniently Northumbria, with her noble ports and rivers, and her long line of coast

washed by the German Ocean, was to the piratical rovers that swarmed into England from Norway, Denmark, Sweden, and the north of Germany. These were collectively first called Saxons, then Danes, and afterwards Normans, who successively supplanted each other and were originally the inhabitants of the shores of the Baltic and North Sea. At the era of the tale of Guthred, or the Widow's Slave, the kingdom of Northumberland was the strong hold of the Danelagh, or Danish invaders, from whence they harassed the rest of the island. Another glance on the map of England will show our juvenile reader how strongly fortified by nature Northumbria was: bounded on the north by the frith of Forth; on the west by the chain of mountainous hills that divide the six northern counties; and on the south by the great estuary of the Humber, which is the receptacle of the Trent, with her thirty arms, to the south; and of many fine rivers on the north, that traverse Yorkshire, the Alde, the Swale, the Wharfe, the two Dons, and their dependencies. We may aptly compare the figure of the Humber on the map to the thick trunk of an oak tree, with its numerous branches; and the mischievous influence of the Danes may be imagined, when we remember that they were able to navigate these rivers in their flat-bottomed boats, and by this means pierce into the heart of South Britain.

Guthred is an historical character, and the Saxon annals thus relate his adventures. After the death of Half-dane, the 'Host' of Danes, who had conquered Northumbria, remained without a leader. The Northmen were much at variance among themselves. Several years before the sons of Regner Lodbrok had seized upon Guthred, the son of Hardacanute, the king of Lethra, in Sweden; they sold him as a slave or thrall, and in 803 he was the property of an old widow in Northumberland. Guth-

red's lineage was known, he was marked as one of the royal race, and he was raised to the supreme authority in a very singular manner. Eadred, bishop of Lindisfarne, acting, as it was said, under the direction of St. Cuthbert, who had appeared to him in a dream, proceeded to the host of the Danes, and persuaded them, as well as the Saxons, to accept Guthred as their sovereign. He was conducted to Oswin's Dune, or the hill of Oswin, and invested with the golden bracelets, the ensigns of royal dignity, and solemnly inaugurated as king of the Northumbrians, though in vassalage to Alfred the Great as his superior. Guthred was deeply indebted to bishop Eadred, and he paid his debt of gratitude by granting and confirming, not only the lands between the Tyne and Wear, but the royal dominion over all between the Tyne and Tees, now the County of Durham. Alfred assented to this donation; for he saw the great advantage that would result to his country, from the wild forests of that district being reclaimed by the peaceful monks. From this grant the palatinate rights of the wealthy bishops of Durham arise, and which are still retained, in a great measure, in the present day. The bishop was a prince between the Tyne and Tees. He could pardon and condemn, and even exercise the power of life and death; and for this reason, a bishop of Durham may, if he please, sit on the bench in scarlet robes when the judges try a criminal within his diocese.

We must not omit to mention that Guthred ever remained faithful to Alfred.

The ready election of this prince by his former enemies, the Danes, as well as the Saxons, may be accounted for, by the reverence in which the royal line of Sweden was held throughout the north as the genuine descendants of Odin, who was the reformer, conqueror, and lawgiver,

of the north, and for several ages worshipped as a god. He was said to be of Asiatic origin, and the dark hair and eyes that tradition describes his descendants to have possessed, make that idea probable.

In such respect was a king of Sweden held in ancient times, on account of his lineal descent from this mighty ruler of the north, that the rival monarchs of Denmark and Norway condescended to hold his bridle and stirrup when he mounted or dismounted, on solemn occasions, when these princes met.



HISTORICAL SUMMARY

TO

THE ROYAL BROTHERS.

EDWARD the fifth nominally reigned over England for two months and thirteen days. His imaginary rule began and ended in his thirteenth year. In that brief space revolutions of government occurred, of which not one was unstained by faithless, deliberate, and cruel murder; and it was closed by a dark and bloody scene.

Scarcely had the wars of the roses been extinguished, when new factions sprung up from the jealousy always felt towards court favorites, by the ancient nobility. Such factions characterise the Plantagenet reigns, and more especially those of the princes of York, who, having been long subjects, continued their habits of intermarry

ing with subjects. Edward the fourth gave great offence to his proud nobility by his marriage with Elizabeth Woodville, lady Grey, whose husband, sir John Grey, fell fighting for the cause of Lancaster at the battle of Barnet. Her father, and several of her family, had sealed with their blood, both on the field and scaffold, their devoted attachment to the red rose. But when the beautiful widow was raised to the English throne by her royal lover, her brothers, uncles, and sons were ennobled, and were great favorites at the court of their royal relative. The earl of Rivers, the queen's brother, was one of the most learned, and chivalric nobles in Europe; he was the great patron of the infant art of printing, an author, and a hero in the field. All parties join in praising a character so accomplished, which shone with the utmost lustre in an age black with crime and barbarism; yet the earl of Rivers was an object of peculiar jealousy to the Duke of Gloucester's party, which was reinforced by Henry duke of Buckingham, a prince of the blood royal. The Marquess of Dorset, the queen's eldest son by her first husband, and lord Richard Grey, her second son, and lord Lisle, her brother-in-law, were likewise obnoxious to the adverse factions, for there was a third party, led by lord Hastings the king's favorite, and augmented by the Stanleys and Howards, who were the king's personal friends, and ancient adherents of the house of York, faithful to the king's children, but envious and hostile to the Woodvilles, because they were the family of the queen. Such were the three parties at the court of England when Edward the fourth died suddenly of a surfeit, leaving the government of his son's minority wholly unsettled. Young Edward was then at Ludlow Castle, under the tutelage of the earl of Rivers, his maternal uncle. As soon as the duke of Gloucester heard the tidings of his brother's

death, he marched towards the south with all speed, in consequence, as afterwards appeared, of a secret understanding with Hastings, with whom he had recently been on terms of hostility. Hastings remained at court, but Buckingham, the duke of Gloucester's ally, hastened with a strong body of troops, ostensibly to join the young king. Lord Rivers, lulled into security by the assurances and professions of the dukes, made haste to meet them with his royal charge. On the 29th of April, Edward the fifth, accompanied by his maternal relatives, had reached Stony Stratford, and on the same day the Duke of Gloucester arrived at Northampton ten miles distant. Lord Rivers immediately went to pay a compliment to the Duke of Gloucester, and to receive his orders. They, together with Buckingham, who appears to have arrived the same day, remained in the latter town till next morning; but the suspicions of Lord Rivers were excited by the outlets of Northampton being guarded during the night. This circumstance occasioned an altercation, in which Gloucester accused Rivers and Grey of having taught the young monarch to distrust him. Rivers, who was an eloquent man, defended himself with his accustomed abilities, but as he could not prove that he was no obstacle to Richard's ambition, his defence was in vain; as a chronicler says, 'they took him and put him in ward.' On being ushered into the presence of the king, at Stony Stratford, they assured him that 'the marquis, his brother, and Rivers, his uncle, had compassed to rule the king and the realm, and to subdue and destroy all noble blood.' The unfortunate boy answered with touching simplicity, 'What my lord marquis may have done in London I cannot say, but I dare answer for my uncle Rivers and my brother here, that they be innocent of any such matter.'

But his protestations were in vain; his mother's rela-

tives were taken into custody, and conveyed to Pontefract Castle. 'Gloucester and Buckingham sent away from the king whom it pleased them, and set new servants about him, and such as liked better them than him; at which dealing he wept, and was nothing content, but it booted him not.'

On the advance to London, their purposes were evident to those whom they most concerned. The queen fled with her children from her palace at Westminster, at midnight, to take sanctuary in the adjoining Westminster Abbey. The confusion and hurry with which her furniture was scattered over the floor by her affrighted attendants, afford the best proof of the extent of their fears. 'The queen herself,' as sir Thomas More says, 'sat alone on the rushes, all desolated and dismayed.'

Westminster Abbey had thirteen years before this event been the refuge of this unfortunate queen, when she took sanctuary at the time her husband was hurled from the throne by the earl of Warwick. She fled by water from the Tower, where she kept court, to Westminster Abbey, and the unhappy Edward the fifth was actually born in sanctuary, in the Jerusalem chamber, an apartment still in existence.

On the 4th of May, the day originally destined for the coronation, which was now postponed till the 22nd of June, the young prince was led by his uncle, with due state, into his capital. On Monday, June 16th, the consent of the queen to the removal of Richard duke of York, the youngest of the princes her sons, from the sanctuary, was extorted by the archbishop of Canterbury, under the pretext that he should not be in sanctuary among thieves and murderers at the moment of so august and sacred a ceremony as his brother's coronation, and pleaded the desire

of his royal brother to have his company in the palace of the Tower.

The principal part of the intermediate time was spent by the king at Ely House, the residence of Thomas Morton, bishop of Ely. This palace, with its extensive orchards and gardens extending over a space of forty acres, occupied the spot where Hatton Street now opens into Holborn, and the ground of the adjoining streets. The name of Hatton Garden is still retained in the neighborhood.

The duke of Gloucester assumed the title of Protector to the king and kingdom in virtue of his near relationship to the crown; and on the 13th of June, a council was held in the Tower, under pretence of regulating the approaching coronation, at which were present the lords Stanley and Hastings, together with many prelates, among whom was Thomas Morton, bishop of Ely, a faithful friend of his late princely guest. Richard duke of Gloucester, affecting an unwonted gaiety, requested the Bishop of Ely to send to Hatton Garden for a dish of strawberries for breakfast. But after he had retired for breakfast, his demeanor was wholly changed. On his return to the council room, he entered with a sour and angry countenance, knitting his brows and gnawing his lips. After a short time he broke his sullen silence, by crying out, 'Of what are those worthy, who have compassed the death of me, king's protector, by nature as well as by law ?'

'To be punished,' said Hastings, 'as heinous traitors !'

'This is the doing of that sorceress, my brother's wife, and her kindred,' said the Protector.

This reply was pleasing enough to Hastings, the mortal enemy of the Woodvilles; he rejoined, 'that it was a vile treason, if true.' Upon which the Protector weary

of dissimulation, cried aloud, 'Yes, I will make good your answer upon your body, traitor, despite of your 'ifs' and 'ands.' ' Then he struck his fist on the board with a great rap, at which token a man that stood at the door cried out 'Treason!' Men in armor, as many as the room could contain, suddenly rushed into it. Richard said to Hastings, 'I arrest thee, traitor!'

Stanley and the other obnoxious lords, with the good bishop of Ely, were hurried to different dungeons.

The Protector told Hastings that 'he would not dine till he saw his head was off.' It was bootless to ask, why? The execution was murderously hurried, with the brutal jest, that the duke was hungry, and wanted to dine. Hastings was brought down to the green by the chapel, and being laid on a long log of timber, which happened to be near, his head was struck off, without the form or pretence of a trial, or even the specification of his alleged offence. Those who, after such deeds, could have doubted the dire designs of the merciless Protector, must surely have relinquished their opinions, when they learned shortly after, that on the very 13th of June which witnessed the murder of lord Hastings, a like scene was exhibited near the northern frontier of the kingdom. On that day, Radcliffe, one of Richard's emissaries, entering the castle of Pontefract, at the head of a body of armed men, put Rivers and his friends to death, with as little semblance of judicial proceeding as was vouchsafed to Hastings.

These horrible transactions, which are disputed by no writer, have here been related almost in the words of sir Thomas More, one of the few historians who had the opportunity of proving their abhorrence of falsehood, by choosing to suffer an ignominious death rather than to utter a lie; he was besides, if not an eye witness, at least an

ear witness to the facts, as he was in existence at the time the events were passing.

Having thus removed the friends of his brother, Richard began openly to attack the title of his nephew to the crown. The first expedient to undermine which is singularly at variance with modern manners and opinions. On Sunday, the 15th of June, 1483, he caused Shaw, a noted preacher, to deliver a sermon against the lawfulness of the king's birth, at Paul's Cross. Now this Paul's Cross was a sort of pulpit, with a Gothic stone canopy, that stood in St. Paul's churchyard till the middle of the seventeenth century, from whence the most noted preachers of the catholic times, and even of those of the Reformed Church, used to deliver sermons to the London populace, who stood around them in the churchyard, in the open air, to listen; it was a place of great resort, and whatever a favorite preacher said from this pulpit had a wonderful effect with the lower classes of London citizens, and the Paul's Cross sermons often glanced at passing events, both in church and state. The extraordinary sermon delivered by Dr. Shaw, who was a priest of the catholic religion, then the established church of England, was a virulent attack on the title of the young sovereign, who was to have been crowned that very day, but whose coronation had been postponed through the machinations of his ambitious uncle. Dr. Shaw's main argument was, that the young king's father, Edward the fourth, had contracted to wed, or had secretly wedded, another wife, lady Elizabeth Lucy, before the marriage was solemnised between him and Elizabeth Woodville, therefore the last marriage was void, and the children born in it illegitimate. Stillington, bishop of Bath, a false and profligate instrument of the duke of Gloucester, pretended that he had married Edward the fourth to lady Elizabeth Lucy, and

this allegation was declared to the London congregation, at Paul's Cross, by Dr. Shaw. To this he added an odious and unjust imputation against the Duchess of York, whereby he insinuated that the duke of Gloucester was the only son of Richard duke of York, and that Edward the fourth and the duke of Clarence, his supposed eldest sons, were spurious ones that their mother had palmed on her husband. To the credit of the London citizens, they received this vile attack on their young king and his family with scorn and loathing, and from that day Dr. Shaw, their favorite preacher, was regarded by them with abhorrence ; they never would hear him again, and he died, a few years after, literally of grief for the detestation all men felt for his unprincipled conduct. But we must return to the narrative of events.

Two days after the unpopular sermon at Paul's Cross, notwithstanding the sullenness with which it was evidently received, the duke of Buckingham thought proper to harangue the populace on the same subject, and finished by proposing for them to acknowledge Richard duke of Gloucester as their lawful king. He had previously mingled a large band of armed men in the crowd ; these shouted 'God save king Richard the Third !' and a few 'prentice boys threw up their caps ; but an ominous silence pervaded the rest of the assembly, whose dread of the troops with which the false Protector had filled the Tower and the fortress of Baynard's Castle (which in those days stood on the Thames wharf still called by its name), prevented the citizens from a more active demonstration of their displeasure.

After this preparation, Richard was proclaimed king on the 22nd of June ; on the 26th of June, he publicly possessed himself of the throne, in the palace of Westminster, and went to return thanks to God for his accession to

the crown ; and early in the month after, July the 6th, he was crowned at Westminster Abbey, having first marched from the north five thousand fresh troops, to overawe the Londoners. As he dared not to be at open enmity with the church, he set at liberty Dr. Rotherham, archbishop of York ; for the same reason he abstained from putting to death the good and faithful Dr. Morton, bishop of Ely (which he longed to do), though he still kept him in durance, but as he did not choose to continue his imprisonment in the Tower, he committed him to the custody of the duke of Buckingham, who sent him to his castle of Brecknock, in Wales, where the good bishop was imprisoned, a fortunate measure for him, as those who read history will know. This Dr. Morton was afterwards the happy instrument of the union of the rival houses of York and Lancaster, by proposing and carrying into effect the marriage of Elizabeth, the eldest daughter of Edward the fourth, become heiress to the line of York by the death of her princely brothers, and Henry earl of Richmond, the last remaining scion of the house of Lancaster, who, by the defeat and destruction of Richard the Third, at Bosworth, put an end to that tyrant's atrocious career, August, 22d, 1485.

The particulars of the murder of the unfortunate young king Edward the fifth, and his brother the duke of York, were never known with historical certainty. The following account was gathered from the confession of the villains that had been employed by Richard the Third to perpetrate the deed of darkness.

Directly after his coronation, Richard left London to proceed on a progress through the north, for the ostensible purpose of being re-crowned at York, and in reality to give some relief to his guilty soul, by placing himself at a distance from the scene of the murders he was about to

execute. While on his journey, he sent an order to Brackenbury, governor of the Tower of London, to murder Edward the fifth and the duke of York his brother. Brackenbury, more conscientious than his master, returned a very submissive answer, but withal told him, he should never have the heart to execute his commands. Richard, vexed to be deceived in his opinion of that officer, sent him, by James Tyrrel, a written order to deliver the keys of the Tower, and the authority, to the bearer, for one night only. Brackenbury obeyed, and Tyrrel gave directions to his agents, Miles Forrest and John Dighton, to execute Richard's commands. That very night, whilst all were asleep, they went to the apartment of the royal children, and smothering them in their bed, caused them to be buried under a little staircase. This is what Tyrrel afterwards confessed, when he was executed for treason, in the reign of Henry the seventh. This story was likewise confirmed by the two subordinate murderers, Forrest and Dighton, who were circumstantial in their description of the crime.

Shakspeare, whose poetry never shines brighter than when it is kindled at the lamp of history, thus describes the scene :

‘ O thus, quoth Dighton, lay the gentle babes,—
Thus, thus, quoth Forrest, girdling one another
Within their innocent alabaster arms.
Their lips were four red roses on a stalk,
That in their summer beauty kissed each other.’

That these ruffians confessed the truth was afterwards confirmed by a chest, containing small bones, being discovered, two hundred years afterwards, under the staircase above mentioned. King Charles the second was so much convinced that this chest held the remains of these

unhappy princes, that he caused them to be interred in the royal vault in Henry the seventh's chapel: he likewise commanded a tablet to be inscribed, commemorating their cruel deaths and the discovery of their remains.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

TO THE

THE CHASE OF WAREHAM.

WHEN Edward, the eldest son of Edgar the Peaceable, succeeded to his father's throne, under the guardianship, or regency, of Archbishop Dunstan, his dominions were exceedingly prosperous; besides swaying the sceptre of the united Saxon heptarchy, he was bretwalda or emperor over the whole island of Great Britain, the kings of Scotland and Wales paying him vassal homage for their several domains; in short, he held the same rule that Edward Plantagenet the First afterwards endeavored to obtain, and succeeded only in regard to Wales. The united wisdom of Edgar the Peaceable and his prime minister, Dunstan, established the English sceptre in peace and prosperity. During his reign the native Danes were kept in bounds, and the invading ones repelled. This desirable order of things was entirely subverted by the crime of Elfrida, the stepmother of king Edward; for, during the weak reign of her son and pupil, Ethelred, the Danes obtained the mastery of England, and inexpressible miseries ensued to the country, which had a pause when Edward the Confessor succeeded to the throne, and were afterwards renewed, with tenfold horror, by the invasion

of another set of Northmen, under William the Conqueror. The whole of this wretchedness may be traced to the personal wickedness of one woman.

Elfrida was the only child of the earl of Devonshire, and was considered the greatest beauty and the richest heiress in England. The king Edgar, who was then a widower, having lost his wife, Elfleda the Fair, the mother of his eldest son Edward, thought that the heiress of Devonshire was worthy to be his consort; but, as she had been brought up in great retirement, and Edgar required beauty and grace in a queen, as well as riches, he thought that report might have exaggerated these qualities in Elfrida, and sent Ethelwold, his favorite, to visit Elfrida, and give him a true account of her claims to personal beauty. Ethelwold went accordingly, and found the young lady so charming that he fell in love with her, and wooed her for himself instead of his master, to whom he gave a false testimony, declaring that Elfrida had no charms but in her rich inheritance. Edgar immediately relinquished the design of marrying her, and his favorite observed, that although Elfrida was not qualified to be the wife of a great king, she was a wealthy match, and he should, if the king would permit him, marry her himself forthwith. King Edgar consented, and Ethelwold soon after wedded the fair heiress, who, being unconscious of the greater honor intended her, thought she had made a good match. In a little time the fair wife of Ethelwold began to be malcontent at finding that her husband kept her mewed up at her own castle, instead of bringing her to the capital, to share in the festivities of the most splendid court in Europe. At last a report reached Edgar's ears that he had been deceived, and after vainly questioning his favorite, why he never brought his bride to court, the king announced his intention of paying a visit to Ethelwold and his wife.

Terrified at this information, Ethelwold went to his lady and confessed his deception, imploring her to appear as ugly and awkward as she could, and rather strive to disgust the king than otherwise ; for if she seemed as lovely as nature had made her, the king would never forgive him the false witness he had borne. Elfrida promised all things, and as her husband thought he had her heart, he was a little calmed. Nevertheless, both the vanity and ambition of Elfrida being mortified, she was enraged at losing a crown, and still more so at having been so misrepresented. She did her utmost to charm king Edgar, who was infuriated at the falsehood of Ethelwold. The unfortunate husband was soon after found murdered in a wood, when on a hunting party. Whether he was assassinated by the order of the king, or his wife, was never clearly understood ; but soon after Edgar married Elfrida for his queen, and she became the mother of his youngest boy, Ethelred, who was seven years old when his father died.

At the death of Edgar the councils of the kingdom were divided into Dunstanites, and Anti-Dunstanites. The partisans of Dunstan were the advocates of church government, as dependent on the pope ; these supported the claims of Edgar's eldest son Edward, and the opposite party set up those of Ethelred, the son of Elfrida. Between Dunstan and the queen the most implacable hatred subsisted, which was not abated when that great prelate and minister carried his point, and established his pupil and ward on the throne, which, it is to be noticed, although hereditary in one family, was not confined to the eldest son, being rather elective in the royal family. Elfrida retired to the royal domain of Corfe Castle, and privately meditated mischief, which, owing to the vigorous

government of archbishop Dunstan, and his power with the Witenagemot, she was not, for three years, able to carry into effect.

It is here desirable to inform the youthful reader the meaning of the word Witenagemot, more than once mentioned in this tale. The Saxon word Witenagemot signifies a 'Meeting of the Wise.' It was the name of the grand legislative assembly of the Anglo-Saxon empire, bearing some resemblance to the parliaments of the present day. It was originally composed of five estates, or ranks of men. The king was the first estate, and the head of the assembly. Next to him sat the clergy, which were bishops, abbots, priests and monks, elected for their superior abilities from different dioceses; the clergy being the only learned men in the kingdom, and as knowledge is more powerful than strength, they took precedence of the nobles and warriors, and sat next the king: the clergy ranked as the second estate. The great earls, or heads of counties, then called aldermen, sat with the tributary princes of Scotland and Wales, with whom they ranked equally, and, like them, wore gold collars and caps of maintenance: these were the nobles, and were reckoned the third estate. They filled the station of the present house of lords, only they are mixed with the clergy, as our house of peers has bishops, or spiritual lords, among its members. The fourth estate was composed of thanes, or warriors, but, as well as warriors, they were obliged to be landowners. An East Anglian (or Norfolk and Suffolk thane) was obliged to possess forty hydes of land to enable him to sit in the Witan; but a thane from Wessex, or the south of England, only needed to possess five hydes (a hyde of land is one hundred acres). This fourth estate is similar to our knights of the shire, or members returned for counties. The fifth estate were farmers and trades-

men, called in the Saxon language churls and burgesses, or burghers ; they stood at the lower end of the hall, and when a law or doom was passed, seldom said more than yea, yea, or nay, nay ; these were elected by their neighbours from every town and village, four good men and the reeve, or manager of the parish money, from each. It is plainly to be seen that the fourth and fifth estate of the Witenagemot, united together, were the origin of our house of commons ; but a century after the Norman Conquest, they turned out the farmers and peasants, and only kept the burgesses, or representatives of towns and cities. It is likewise to be noted, that the Witenagemot was held in one great hall, or on a heath or common, while the house of lords and the house of commons, in our days, sit in council in different halls, excepting they meet together when the king convenes or dismisses them.

Tradition says, that the Witan existed before the Saxons or Romans conquered Britain, and was held by our British ancestors at Stonehenge, that surprising circle of masses of stone which is still to be seen in the midst of Salisbury Plain. In the times of our Saxon ancestors, when a law passed in the Witan it was called a doom, instead of our modern phrase of an act of parliament, or a statute.

In our days the kingdom of Sweden, which was partly the mother country of the Anglo Saxons, still retains the grand national tribunal of the five estates, and the last (the peasants) are a grave venerable body, men of few words, but of great respectability, and not without power in the commonwealth.

It was this great council of the Witenagemot that confirmed the title of young Edward, and placed him under the tutelage and guardianship of archbishop Dunstan, a most austere man, deserving the reprobation of pos-

terity as a fanatic and persecutor: but during the short reign of Edward, and the long one of Edgar his father, he was a great statesman, and most able prime minister, over a happy people and a flourishing country. Elfrida and her partisans were kept in awe by his vigorous administration; but that which public rebellion dared not attempt, accident and private malice effected. Edward and Ethelred, though their several parties might strive to render them enemies, were united by strong ties of brotherly affection. Edward chose to hunt the deer at Wareham, in the neighborhood of Corfe Castle, in Dorsetshire, where Elfrida and Ethelred then resided. It is said that with youthful curiosity he was purposely allured to the castle by the tricks of Wulstan, the queen's little cankered dwarf, and he advanced alone to the lofty hall of his mother-in-law. She received him at the doorway, and kissed him. Before the king alighted, a cup was offered, and as he was quaffing the draught, one of Elfrida's attendants (some say herself) stabbed him. The wounded prince had yet strength enough to spur his horse, but fainting on the road, his body was dragged in the stirrup by the affrighted animal, who stopped at the cottage of a blind widow. Life was then extinct in the young king, whose bloody corpse was frightfully mangled by the rough roads over which it had been hurried. Elfrida thus gained her wicked ends, for Ethelred, the younger son of Edgar, was then sole heir. So little did the boy exult in his mother's successful crime, that when told of his brother's dreadful death, he wept most bitterly; this conduct enraged his violent mother to that degree, that she seized a wax taper and so belabored her child with it that she almost killed him. This vile woman became afterwards abjectly penitent; she built a convent on the spot where Edward's body was found, and ended her life in childish penances;

among others, history records that her terror of the supposed approach of the evil one was so great, that she sought to evade his clutch by covering her body all over with little crosses. She died in extreme horror.

There are two terms that require explanation in this tale, the expressions Drink heal and Weas heal. They were the forerunners of a custom not entirely obsolete among us, and simply meant an invitation to drink one's health, and the answer before drinking of 'Wish health.' A little after this time, when the lawless Danes filled the land with violence and treachery, and actions similar to this murder of Elfrida's became of daily occurrence in the land, the custom of pledging a companion when drinking was usual; and the phrase of 'I pledge you,' still in use in country places, meant originally, Your honor is pledged not to stab me while the cup is at my lips.

Ethelred, who seems to have had, naturally, kindly feelings, being brought up under the misrule of his violent, capricious mother, proved a weak and bad king, and his misgovernment laid the foundation of nearly three centuries of misery to his country, which might have been averted, if his brother Edward, a prince of great promise, and assisted by able ministers, had not been cut off by the murderous Elfrida.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

TO

THE SONS OF THE CONQUEROR.

THE extensive tract of land in Hampshire, called the New Forest, from the era of the Conquest to the present day, was, in the Saxon times, a fruitful and cultivated district, called Ytew. The desecration of upwards of thirty-six churches thereon, and the depopulation of numerous towns and villages belonging thereto, with the destruction of the property of the inhabitants, who were driven forth from their homes, which were laid waste to form this hunting ground, without the slightest compensation made to the owners, rendered the Norman dynasty exceedingly unpopular with their subjects. In the lifetime of the Conqueror, his favorite son Richard, and his grandson, lost their lives hunting in this chase.

His successor, William Rufus, continued throughout his whole reign the same lawless depredations on the property of his subjects, and greatly enlarged the precincts of the New Forest; according to the early chronicles, upwards of fifty churches were ultimately destroyed, besides seventeen churches and towns overthrown and desolated, to make another New Forest of lesser extent at Windsor.

Historians affirm that the Norman princes concealed a political motive under the pretence of a passionate love of hunting, and that they depopulated these districts in order to afford a freer access to the troops which they occasionally sent from Normandy, to overawe the English.

But a violent love for the chase seems to have been the besetting sin of the Norman princes, from whence sprung

their cruel game laws; for instance, a man that killed a stag out of season was hanged or beheaded, and any one who took a hawk's nest, and destroyed the eggs or young, was sentenced to lose his eyes.

The New Forest, which is thirty miles in circuit, is divided into nine walks; to each there is a keeper, two rangers, a bow bearer, and a lord warden. On the north side of Malwood Castle is an oak that buds on Christmas day and always withers before night.

The bad character of William Rufus is attributed to a neglected education: an historian thus describes his character: 'Bred up to arms from his youth, and at a court where he continually beheld instances of severity and absolute power, he became a perfect brute in his behavior and manners. He was of a very ill disposition, which being never corrected by education, frequently led him into actions unworthy of a prince. To these ill qualities he joined a great contempt for religion and principles, utterly regardless of honor or honesty. He was as greedy of money as his father, only he disposed of it, when unjustly gained, in vain expenses, wherein he was guided more by caprice than reason. The only good quality remarkable in him was his great courage, which however was scarcely to be distinguished from a brutal fierceness.'

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

TO

WOLSEY BRIDGE.

THOMAS WOLSEY was the only son of Thomas and Joan Wolsey, and was born at Ipswich, in August, 1471. His father was a butcher and grazier. The house in which Wolsey was born is still shown, and is situated in the south side of the passage leading to St. Nicholas' churchyard; and in the ancient shambles, or butchery, which lately stood upon the Cornhill, at Ipswich, was a stall, or stand, with the initials of Wolsey's father carved thereon, and some other insignia which tradition points out as belonging to him. Wolsey's father, though a man of a low trade, was in opulent circumstances, and connected with some of the most respectable families at Ipswich, either by descent or marriage. His will is preserved, wherein it appears that he left his lands to his wife Joan, and the rest of his wealth divided between his wife and son, reserving however a handsome bequest to the church of St. Nicholas and the poor of the parish.

There are floating traditions in Suffolk, which intimate that the butcher Wolsey was desirous that his son should follow his own trade, and in pursuance of this plan, he made him assist in driving the beasts he caught at various markets for sale and slaughter at Ipswich. In one of these expeditions he nearly lost his life, at a dangerous ford at Reydon, over a branch of the river Blythe, when driving a number of bullocks which had been purchased from Reydon salt marshes and Southwold common. It is further said, that he promised on the spot, 'that if ever he became a cardinal, he would build a bridge at that dan-

gerous spot.' Wolsey kept his word, and when he arrived at the high dignity his youthful ambition even then aimed at, he built a bridge at Reydon, which is to this day called Wolsey Bridge.

It is a singular thing, that although forced to join at times the inconsistent occupations of a drover and student, that Wolsey was admitted as a bachelor of arts at Magdalen College at the age of fourteen, from which extraordinary circumstance he was called the Boy Bachelor. It must be observed, that students were entered at the universities much earlier in former times than is usual at this era: but to take a degree at the age of fourteen, justly excited universal astonishment throughout the kingdom, in all men who were devoted to, or interested in learning; and Wolsey was marked as a character likely to rise in the church, which was then the only path to high distinction. We must not forget to note here, that young Wolsey had been as promising at Ipswich school as he was as a student at Magdalen College; so says Lloyd, one of his biographers. The first step to his subsequent greatness in the state was his appointment to the situation of domestic chaplain to Henry the Seventh, a monarch who himself had received a conventional education, and was a discerning patron of learned men, knowing well how to appreciate them. There were, as matters stood in the middle ages, two roads in the church to great distinction: one was, for a learned priest to practise great austerity and sanctity, so that he was considered a saint and revered by all men; and the other, to devote himself regularly to business as a statesman, and govern church and state as prime minister, which was done in England by whoever held the office of lord chancellor. The latter path was chosen by Wolsey, who had a particular inclination to a court life, and de-

clared, that 'if he could set one foot in the court, he would soon introduce his whole body.'

The first affair of state in which he was concerned, was a mission from Henry the seventh to Maximilian, Emperor of Germany, who was then at Bruges. After receiving his instructions at the royal palace of Shene (now called Richmond), where the king then kept court, he set out on his errand. We must consider the state of the roads, and the delays of travelling at that time, which were so great that a journey from Ipswich to London took at least a week, and even in the memory of man, a day and night was spent on the road when travelling by a stage coach. Therefore, when Wolsey presented himself before Henry the Seventh at the end of three days, that monarch naturally supposed that his envoy had not yet set out, but had returned for fresh instructions, and he began to reproach him for his dilatoriness, when, to his astonishment, Wolsey declared that he had actually been at Bruges, and performed his mission successfully. 'Ay,' answered the king, 'but upon farther deliberation, finding that something had been omitted in your instructions, I despatched a messenger after you with fuller powers.' To which Wolsey replied, 'that he had indeed met the messenger on his return, and on communicating with him, found that he had anticipated the view that Henry had taken of the business, and performed his negotiation with the emperor precisely according to Henry's second thoughts of the affair, so that there was no need of a second journey.' Henry was highly pleased with his envoy's sagacity and promptitude, and with its favorable issue: he gave him public thanks, and declared him in council fit to be entrusted with the management of affairs of the utmost importance. He rewarded him with the deanery of Lincoln, and the prebends of Walton, Brindhold, and

Stow; and to complete his good fortune, his graceful and eloquent relation of the particulars of his embassy before the council, attracted the notice of the prince of Wales, afterwards Henry the eighth, who grew from that time extremely fond of his company.

Such was his introduction as a statesman. From the first year of the reign of Henry the eighth, 1509, till 1529, the butcher's son ruled England with absolute power, and at the same time with great ability. These twenty years was the happiest epoch of Henry's reign; for, after Wolsey's fall, the sovereign commenced a career of crime, and his people of misery. Wolsey filled the high offices of Grand Almoner, Archbishop of York, Lord Chancellor, Pope's Legate, and Cardinal. He carried personal splendor and state higher than any subject ever did before or since, and would most likely have died in possession of all these honors, had he not aimed at the highest then in the world, even at the Popedom; but his intrigues to reach this pinnacle of a churchman's ambition lured him to such imprudent steps as caused the downfall of his mighty power, and a few weeks after he died of grief at Leicester Abbey.

The munificent public works executed by Wolsey, both as prime minister and from his own private revenue, are greater perhaps than any subject ever performed. He re-endowed and reformed his own university of Oxford, with such magnificence, that he is almost considered as its founder, according to its present state. His love for his native county of Suffolk was great, and the college he built and endowed in his mother town of Ipswich, is a proof that he had the magnanimity not to be ashamed of his origin; but the rapacious tyrant, whose caprice caused his downfall, seized upon the revenues and destroyed the infant college of which only one of the gateways remain. But

perhaps the most extraordinary work in which this great man engaged, was, that he partly wrote and wholly revised, Lillye's grammar, a work of such use that it was in general use within the last century. Such was the love of this mighty statesman for learning, that he paused in his career of unbounded power and pomp to smooth the way to children for the attainment of knowledge: who, after such an example, need be ashamed of devoting their talents to writing children's books !

This sketch of Wolsey has not shown the dark side of his character, which was deformed with many faults, and some crimes. Shakspeare has summed up the account of both good and ill, with such skill that volumes cannot impress upon the youthful mind a more accurate comprehension of Wolsey's character, than that given in the dialogue between Catherine of Arragon, Henry the eighth's divorced queen, and Griffith, her chamberlain.

CATHERINE.

Didst thou not tell me, Griffith, as thou led'st me,
That the great child of honor, Cardinal Wolsey,
Was dead ?

Prithee, good Griffith, tell me how he died.

GRIFFITH.

Well, the voice goes, madam :
For after the stout Earl Northumberland
Arrested him at York, and brought him forward
(As a man sore tainted), to his answer.
He fell sick suddenly, and grew so ill,
He could not sit his mule.
At last, with easy roads, he came to Leicester,
Lodg'd in the abbey ; where the reverend abbot,
With all his convent, honorably received him ;
To whom he gave these words,—‘ O father abbot,
An old man, broken with the storms of state,
Is come to lay his weary bones among ye ;
Give him a little earth for charity ! ’

So went to bed ; where eagerly his sickness
 Pursu'd him still ; and three nights after this,
 About the hour of eight (which he himself
 Foretold should be his last), full of repentance,
 Continual meditations, tears, and sorrows,
 He gave his honors to the world again,
 His blessed part to heaven, and slept in peace.

CATHERINE.

So may he rest ; his faults lie gently on him !
 Yet thus far, Griffith, give me leave to speak him,
 And yet with charity ;—He was a man
 Of an unbounded stomach, ever ranking
 Himself with princes ; one, that by suggestion
 Tithed all the kingdom ; simony was fair play ;
 His own opinion was his law : I'the presence
 He would say untruths ; and be ever double,
 Both in his words and meaning : He was never,
 But where he meant to ruin, pitiful :
 His promises were then as he was, mighty ;
 But his performance as he now is, nothing.
 Of his own body he was ill, and gave
 The clergy ill example.

GRIFFITH.

Noble madam,

Men's evil manners live in brass ; their virtues
 We write in water. May it please your highness
 To hear me speak his good now ?

CATHERINE.

Yes, good Griffith,

I were malicious else.

GRIFFITH.

This cardinal,

Though from an humble stock, undoubtedly
 Was fashioned to much honor. From his cradle
 He was a good scholar, and a ripe and good one ;
 Exceeding wise, fair spoken, and persuading ;
 Lofty, and sour, to them that loved him not ;
 But, to those men that sought him, sweet as summer

And though he were unsatisfied in getting
(Which were a sin), yet in bestowing, madam,
He was most princely : Ever witness for him
Those twins of learning, which he raised in you,
Ipswich and Oxford ! one of which fell with him,
Unwilling to outlive the good he did it ;
The other, though unfinished, yet so famous,
So excellent in art, and still so rising,
That Christendom shall ever speak his virtue
His overthrow heap'd happiness upon him ;
For then, and not till then, he felt himself,
And found the blessedness of being little :
And, to add greater honors to his age
Than man could give him, he died, fearing God.

CATHERINE.

After my death I wish no other herald,
No other speaker of my living actions,
To keep my honor from corruption,
But such an honest chronicler as Griffith.
Whom I most hated living, thou hast made me,
With thy religious truth and modesty,
Now in his ashes honor. Peace be with him !

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

TO

THE JUDGMENT OF SIR THOMAS MORE.

SIR Thomas More was the only son of sir John More, a judge of the king's bench, and was born in Milk street, London, 1480. At a very early period of his life he gave such indications of the talents for which he was conspicuous, that Cardinal Morton*, archbishop of Canterbury, in whose household he was placed, prophetically remarked, 'This child, here waiting at table, whosoever shall live to see it, will prove a marvellous man!' The young reader must note from this anecdote the peculiar manners of those days. Sir Thomas More was then a judge's son, and yet he was servitor at the cardinal's table. In ancient times, the tyro, either in arms or learning, let his birth or rank in life be what it might, during his noviciate, ever waited on his elders, and supposed betters in learning or wisdom; and even at the present day, in all schools and establishments of monastic institution, as Eton, Winchester, or Westminster, some faint traces may still be discovered of this antique system, which has now degenerated into the capricious and irregular custom of fagging.

Sir Thomas More greatly distinguished himself at Oxford, after which he entered the inns of court, which were then, whatever they may be now, the finishing school of moral worth and high attainment for the young nobles and gentry of England, whether their intention was to devote themselves to a legal profession, or to arms, or the senate.

* This excellent prelate has already been introduced to the juvenile reader, in a preceding tale, under the name of Dr. Morton, Bishop of Ely.

Young More's destination was to the former, for we find him called to the bar, when a student at Lincoln's Inn, and he followed his profession with the greatest success. In 1502, he became a member of parliament, and distinguished himself in such a manner, in opposing a grant for the in marriage of Henry the seventh's daughter to the king of Scotland, James the fourth, that the king was told, a beardless boy had prevented its being passed; in revenge for which, Henry the seventh had the meanness to send young More's father, the judge, to the Tower, for some pretended offence, from whence he was not set at liberty till he was heavily fined. When Henry the eighth ascended the throne, the fame of young More's abilities and eloquence having reached his ears, his majesty persuaded him to enter his service, and immediately gave him the situation of master of requests, soon after knighted him, and made him a member of his privy council. His wit and universal talents so effectually gained the favor of his sovereign, that he treated him with extraordinary condescension and familiarity, of which many stories are told. In 1518, sir Thomas became treasurer of the exchequer, and five years afterwards was chosen speaker of the house of commons; having filled several other high offices with invariable credit and success, Henry selected him, in 1529, to be the successor to cardinal Wolsey, as lord chancellor, being the first layman that had ever filled that exalted office.

After executing that high charge with singular zeal and impartiality, he resigned it in May, 1532, because he would not countenance the destruction of a church to which he was a most faithful and devoted servant. His retirement was not attended with the security, either to his person or his conscience, which might have been anticipated; for, having uniformly opposed Henry's divorce from

Catherine of Arragon, he rendered himself obnoxious, both to his master and the new queen, and by refusing to attend Ann Boleyn's coronation, his doom was sealed. A crisis was at hand from which no honest man of the catholic religion could escape. In 1534, the Act of Supremacy appeared, and sir Thomas More, sincerely attached to the faith of his ancestors, refused to swerve from it. He was imprisoned, arraigned of high treason, and on the most scandalous testimony, pronounced guilty. The usual penalty of being hanged, drawn, and quartered, was commuted into simple decapitation, a boon which sir Thomas More acknowledged by one of those lively sallies for which he was as celebrated as for his graver talents :

‘God forbid,’ said he, ‘the king should use any more such mercy to any of my friends; and God bless my posterity from such pardons.’

He was beheaded at Tower Hill, on Tuesday, the 6th July, 1535, being then in his fifty-fifth year, and suffered, not only with fortitude, but with cheerfulness.

Sir Thomas More amidst all the cares of state, spared time to devote to the superintendence of the education of his children, and he was amply rewarded, since his three daughters were the pride of their sex and their country for their high attainments and many virtues; even his step-daughter, likewise much beloved by him, manifested great excellence of character, and showed a tender regard for him in his misfortunes. His great-grandson, Cresacre More, wrote the life of his noble progenitor, which is one of the most beautiful biographies ever penned. From it we learn some interesting particulars of his life and family. Among others, the anecdote on which the accompanying story is founded. ‘It happened,’ says Cresacre More, ‘on a time, that a beggar woman’s dog, which she

had lost, was presented for a jewel to my lady More, and she had kept it some seven-night very carefully ; but at last the beggar had notice where her dog was, and presently she came to complain to sir Thomas, that his lady withheld her dog from her ; presently my lady was sent for, and the dog brought with her : which sir Thomas taking in his hands, caused his wife, because she was the worthier person, to stand at the upper end of the hall, and the beggar at the lower end, and saying that he sat there to do justice, he bade each of them to call the dog, which when they did, the dog went presently to the beggar, forsaking my lady. When he saw this, he bade my lady be contented, for the dog was none of hers ; yet she, repining at the sentence of my lord chancellor, agreed with the beggar, and gave her a piece of gold which would well have bought three dogs, and so all parties were agreed, every one smiling to see his manner of inquiring out the truth.'

Let all disunited families study with care this beautiful sketch of a household of love, as given by an eye witness, sir Thomas's friend, the great Erasmus : 'More hath built, near London, upon the Thames' side, to wit, at Chelsea, a commodious house, neither mean nor subject to envy, and yet magnificent enough ; there he converseth affably with his family, his wife, his son and daughter-in-law, his three daughters and their husbands, with eleven grandchildren. There is not any man so loving to his children as he, and he loveth his old wife as well as if she were a young maid ; and such is the excellency of his temper, that whatsoever happeneth that could not be helped, he loveth it as though nothing could have happened more happily. You would say, there were in that place Plato's academy ; but I do the house injury in comparing it to Plato's academy, wherein there was only disputationes

of members, or geometrical figures, and sometimes of moral virtues. I should rather call his house a school of the Christian religion; their special care is piety and virtue; there is no quarrelling, or intemperate words heard; none seen idle; which household discipline that worthy gentleman doth not govern by proud and lofty words, but with all kind and courteous benevolence. Every body performeth, yet is there always alacrity, neither is sober mirth any thing wanting. He suffereth none of his servants either to be idle or to give themselves to games, but some of them he allotted to look to the garden, assigning to every one his separate plot; some again he set to sing, some to play on the organs; he suffereth none of them *touch cards or dice*. He used, before bed time, to call them together, and say certain prayers with them. This life of domestic felicity was suddenly destroyed by the decree of a tyrant; and the mandate which consigned the most accomplished individual in the English dominions to the scaffold, carried desolation to all who depended on him, gave his lands to a stranger, and his

Once fair spreading family dissolved.'

Amidst this most estimable and distinguished family, none shone with greater lustre than Margaret, the eldest daughter and most beloved pupil of sir Thomas More. She resembled him in person more nearly than the rest of his children, and in the depth and acuteness of her understanding. She was the dispenser of her father's secret charities, and to her alone he entrusted the knowledge of the severe religious austerities to which he subjected himself. A most affecting scene took place between the father and daughter on his return from the Tower after his condemnation, which it would be a want of judgment to describe in any other words than those of her husband's,

Mr. Roper, a most accomplished gentleman, worthy of being the son-in-law of sir Thomas More :

‘ When sir Thomas came from Westminster to the Tower ward again, his daughter, my wife, desirous to see her father, whom she thought she should never see in this world after, and also to have his final blessing, gave attendance about the Tower wharf, where she knew he would pass by before he could enter the Tower. There tarrying his coming, as soon as she saw him, after his blessing upon her knees reverently received, she hasting towards him, without consideration or care of herself, pressing in amongst the midst of the throng and company of the guard, that with halberds and bills went round about him, hastily ran to him, who, well liking her most natural and dear daughterly affection towards him, gave her his fatherly blessing, and many godly words of comfort besides. From whom when she turned to depart, she, not satisfied with the former sight of her dear father, and like one that had forgotten herself, being all transported with the entire love of her dear father, having neither heed to herself nor the press of people and multitude that were there about him, suddenly turned back again, ran to him as before, took him about the neck, and divers times kissed him most lovingly, and at last, with a full and heavy heart, was fain to depart from him ; the beholding whereof was to many of them that were present thereat so lamentable, that it made them, for very sorrow thereof, to weep and mourn.’

The morning before he suffered, sir Thomas wrote to his dear daughter the following letter, with a piece of charcoal, in the blank leaf of one of his works. Besides its intrinsic excellence, the allusions it contains to the persons composing his once happy family circle, make it deeply interesting :

‘ Our Lord bless you, good daughter, and your good

husband, and your little boy, and all yours, and all my children, and all my god children, and all our friends. Recommend me, when ye may, to my good daughter Cecily*, whom I beseech the Lord to comfort; and I send her my blessing, and to all her children, and pray her to pray for me. I send her a handkerchief, and God comfort my good son, her husband. My good daughter Dauncey† hath the picture in parchment, that you delivered me from my lady Coniers; her name is on the back. Show her that I heartily pray her, that you may send it in my name to her again, for a token from me, to pray for me. I like special well Dorothy Collie‡: I pray you be good to her. I would wot whether this be she that you wrote me of; if not, yet I pray you be good to the other as you may, in her affliction, and to my daughter Joan Alleyn too||. Give her, I pray you some kind answer, for she sued hither to me this day to pray you to be good to her. I cumber you, good Margaret, much; but I would be sorry if it should be any longer than to-morrow, for it is St. Thomas's eve, and the utas of St. Peter, and therefore to-morrow long I to go to God. It were a day meet and convenient for me. I never liked your manners towards me better than when you kissed me last, for *I love when daughterly love and dear charity hath no leisure to stay for worldly courtesy.*§. Farewell, my dear child, and pray for me, and I shall for you and all your friends, that we may merrily meet in Heaven. I thank you for your great cost.

* Mrs. Heron, his third daughter.

† His second daughter, Elizabeth.

‡ A beloved servant in the family, who married another faithful retainer of sir Thomas, his secretary, John Harris. It is a redeeming trait in human nature that so many persons should have been affectionate and true in the trying hour of adversity.

|| A servant of Mrs. Roper, his god-daughter.

§ In this beautiful sentence he alludes to their last interview on Tower Wharf.

I send now to my god daughter Clement[†], her algormise stone, and I send her and my godson, and all her children, God's blessing and mine. I pray you, at time convenient, commend me to my good son John More. I liked well his natural fashion.* Our Lord bless him and his wife, my loving daughter, to whom I pray him to be good, as he hath great cause; and if that the land of mine come into his hand, he brake not my will concerning his sister Dauncey: and our Lord bless Thomas and Austin (his sons), and all that they have.'

It was one of the last requests of sir Thomas More to Henry the eighth, that his daughter Margaret might attend his funeral. In defiance of the danger which attended the act, she bought the head of her honored parent, when it was about to be thrown into the Thames; and when brought before the privy council, and harshly questioned concerning this act, and why she did it, she replied boldly, 'That it might not become food for fishes.' She died at the early age of thirty-six; and by her own desire she was buried with her father's head on her bosom.

A fine family picture of all these interesting personages, by Holbein, is still in existence, likewise engravings from it. In this picture is introduced the portrait of the beggar-girl's dog, on which the accompanying tale is founded.

Alice lady More, although not a pleasant mannered or sweet tempered woman, must have possessed some good qualities, as she was an excellent stepmother to sir Thornas's motherless children, as we learn from some verses of his translated from the Latin, in which he wrote them, by

† The wife of Dr. Clement, his ward and relative, and beloved as a daughter.

* He likewise met his father at Tower Wharf.

archdeacon Wrangham. They were meant for an epitaph on his first and second wives.

Within this tomb Jane, wife of More, reclines ;
This, More for Alice and himself designs.
The first, dear object of my youthful vow,
Gave me three daughters and a son to know ;
The next,—ah, virtue in a step-dame rare,—
Nursed my sweet infants with a mother's care.
With both my years so happily have pass'd,
Which most my love I know not—first or last.

The worthies of sir Thomas More's family are not yet enumerated. Mrs. Roper's daughter, Mrs. Bazett, was one of the most accomplished and pious ladies of her time, and translated from the Latin her grandfather's 'Exposition of our Savior's Passion,' in a style so like his own, that for some time many believed it to be his composition. England still possesses descendants from this most illustrious branch of the family.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY
TO
LADY LUCY'S PETITION.

THE conspiracy against the government of William the third, and to effect the restoration of his exiled father-in-law, James the second, for which lord Preston and his friend, Mr. Ashton, were condemned to death, took place in 1692.

Sir John Dalrymple relates the anecdote of the courageous child of lord Preston, in his Memoirs. Ashton was put to death, but the presence of mind of the young lady saved lord Preston's life.

Her name was Catherine, and not Lucy. Her brother Edward dying young, she, with her two sisters, became her father's co-heiresses; at seventeen she married a gallant young nobleman, the son of Lord Widrington, with whom she led a most happy life. Her memory is still greatly respected for her virtues and talents, in Lancashire, her native county.

THE END.





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